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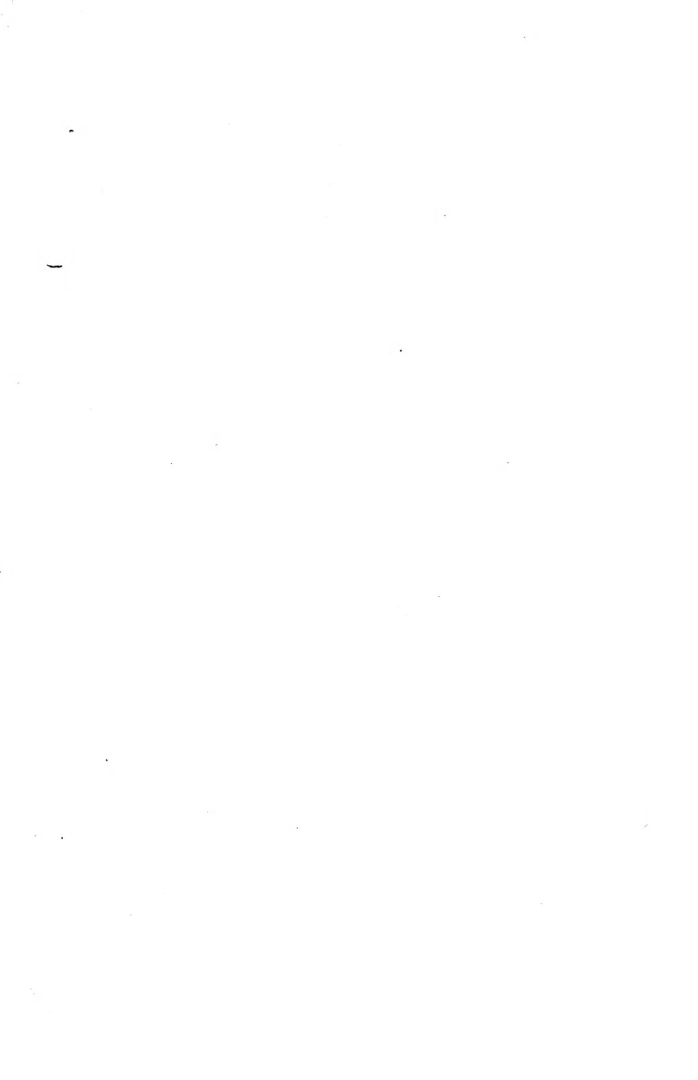
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1886

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.







VINDICATION,

AND OTHER POEMS

BY

GEORGE D. BAIRD.



NEW YORK, U. S. A.

1886.

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**R. B. BAIRD,
39 PARK PLACE, NEW YORK,
PUBLISHER.**

VINDICATION

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GEORGE D. BAIRD.



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TO MY BELOVED
MOTHER,
WHOSE PIETY AND FORTITUDE,
INSTRUCTION AND EXAMPLE,
HAVE BEEN
THE SOURCE, TO A LARGE DEGREE,
OF THE
SENTIMENTS OF THIS BOOK —
THIS VOLUME
IS
AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

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AN APOSTROPHE TO JEHOVAH.

CONSECRATION ODE.

Oh thou inspiring sovereign of my soul !
Eternal, pure, omnipotent and just,
I would this pen were as the thunderbolt;
The ink whereby my zealous words are fixed
Upon the faithful page were as the fierce
And scorching flood that flows from Etna's mouth.
If such could be, I would transfix upon
The crystal scroll on high my tribute to
Thy name, that fettered there the words of flame,
Through day and night, eclipse, Aurora's light,
Might strike the bad with terror, and the good
With praise: and there abide, till earth, embraced
By ice, and lost in hopeless death, begets
No more.

VINDICATION



A ROMANCE
OF THE AGE OF LOUIS XIV.
OF FRANCE

A POEM OF FIVE CANTOS,
IN BLANK VERSE.

CANTO I.

THE QUARREL.

"I will make you kill yourself."

FIRST SECTION.

"Good morning Lord Sebastian ! did you rest
In peace when you had left the banquet hall
Succeeding the festivities ? "

" I did

My lord, nor with a single dream disturbed."

- 5 But I proceed too fast ; perhaps a slight
Elucidation would be *à propos*.

The speaker quoted first, a handsome man,
Was Lord Augustus, baron in the pay
Of Duke of Anjou. Though descended from

- 10 A noble line of peers, the scion of
A wealthy house, he finally was forced
To meet the stern adversities of life.
The sphere of fortune had revolved and thrown
Him in the dark : the court of Anjou was
15 His home when first we meet him, as we see
Above. My lord Sebastian, same in rank
As Lord Augustus, was the Treasurer
Of Normandy estate : — his fortune was
Of similar degree, as was his face.

- 20 " Well, that is cheerful news," Augustus said.
" Sit down and tell me what has happened that
Would be of interest, in Normandy. "

" There's naught of interest to you my lord,"
Sebastian answered ; but a look of deep

- 25 Disgust appeared upon the baron's face,
As he declared in language bold and blunt,
" Interrogated people have no news :

- But by a train of questions I will draw
Such fruitful information from your tongue,
30 That volumes would not hold the bulk of news.
First, how is Isabel ? " The color ebb'd
And flow'd in handsome waves across the face
Of Lord Sebastian. Then Augustus laugh'd :
" The subject is too personal I see :
35 Another ; how is Lady Catherine ? "
" Exceeding well," Sebastian briefly said.
" And how does she esteem her father's choice ? "
The baron asked. To which Sebastian, who
Recovered his composure, gave reply :
40 " Her father has not told her of his choice."
" Not told her ! " said Augustus, " was she not
Aware of what the Duke of Anjou had
Been seeking for when visiting his grace
Her father ? "
" No," the Treasurer returned,
45 " She has not had the slightest hint that would
Reveal the object of his grace's call."
" I must confess it fills me with surprise :
The lady then knows not her father's plan ? "
This question was by Lord Augustus put,
50 And quickly answered by the Treasurer :
" As little as the daring gamester knows
His risky fate."
The barons both relapsed
In thought, and while the silence reigns
We must employ our time. The room in which
55 We meet the noblemen was large and rich.
The costly paintings, gorgeous tapestries,
Magnificent appointments, furniture
And carpetings, had qualified the room
For courtly uses by his grace the duke.
60 The reigning majesty of France was often pleased
To visit Anjou, and declared himself
As pleased with this apartment, which, he said,
Was equal to the finest in the state.
The scene of action was the country-seat
65 Of Anjou's princely duke ; a noble manse,
The envy of the peerage, built without
Regard to cost or time or labor. We
Will not reflect upon the peasantry

Who bore the burden of this splendid pile,
 70 For that would cast a deeper gloom upon
 The tale.

Our tether tightens ; we have strayed
 Enough. Augustus moves and speaks again.

“ They have not seen each other I believe ? ”

Sebastian, startled from his reverie,
 75 Replies with wakened int'rest in his voice :

“ Oh no ; the fact is singular at best :
 But should his noble form and handsome face
 Confront her tender eyes in manly grace
 Imagined wrong and prejudiced reserve

80 Would pass away no longer could preserve :
 All feelings of dislike her peace alloyed
 Would quickly melt and passion fill the void.”

Augustus rose, and with a courtly bow
 Replied, “ For this most graceful tribute to
 85 The heir of Anjou, many thanks ! Arise
 Their graces come.”

The heavy curtains drawn

Aside by pages dressed in livery
 Of rainbow splendor furnish us a view
 Of France's high nobility. The Duke
 90 Of Anjou with his Duchess, and the Duke
 Of Normandy upon the lady's left,
 Advance ; while in their train are barons knights
 And peeresses a numerous company.

Of all the dignitaries present one demands
 95 A more than passing notice. Stand behind
 This curtain where we can observe without
 Restraint. He sits with graceful ease, apart
 In conversation with a lady. Watch
 His features and remember them. His form,
 100 More handsome than his face is strong and well
 Proportioned, and should judge his age to be
 About a double score. But we must let
 The story tell the rest. This man is known
 By title of Lord Arnaud, same in rank
 105 As other lords, retainer to the Duke
 Of Anjou.

But the ducal party have
 Withdrawn a space, conversing by themselves.
 An anxious look is on her grace's face,

- Which quickly fades entirely away
 110 As Normandy replies to Anjou thus :
 " Yes, as you say, your son's a handsome youth ;
 I must confess my admiration for
 His manly bearing and his intellect.
 To which the Duke of Anjou then replied :
 115 " No time and labor have I spared to make
 Him worthy of such praise. His limbs are girt
 With strength of welded steel : his judgement keen
 Attests paternal care ; his faculties,
 Developed to their boundary's extent,
 120 Express themselves in action look and word."
 To which the Duchess supplemented thus :
 " And I your grace have aimed as well to make
 His disposition gentle and refined,
 And by maternal influence subject
 125 Emotions of impulsive youth to fine
 Heroic sensibilities."

The Duke

- Addressed was silent for awhile, then spoke.
 " Your grace I will accede to your request :
 My daughter is my all ; in whom resides
 130 The graces virtues and accomplishments.
 Delightful to a father's heart ; and if
 I were not thoroughly convinced your son
 Would be a faithful husband, I would not
 Consent unto the match. I could not make
 135 A better choice than Anjou's only son."
 " And I believe your grace's daughter will
 Become a loving faithful wife unto our son.
 And I as well have doted on my child,
 E'er since his youthful form and intellect
 140 My fondness charmed ; and dearly do I wish
 He might remain forever single, that
 Our growing years he could keep company
 With undivided heart. Still it is best ;
 For youthful hearts would aged grow if théy
 145 Were kept too constantly with old and gray."
 " My sentiments exactly you have voiced,"
 Said Normandy, and as he spoke a page
 Proclaimed the entrance of the heir. All rose
 Except the ducal party, to receive
 150 The son of Anjou, who advanced to greet
 His parents and their guest. Before he speaks

- A short description would be timely here.
His youthful frame and limbs are shapely ; tall
155 Enough to satisfy a mild desire ;
A handsome countenance of faultless mould ;
An eye that beamed with kindness and revealed
A character that one might love and not
Be apprehensive; graceful carriage ; step
160 As firm as martial education could
Attain ; as straight as shaft of javelin : —
But more of him we learn at other times
Concerning personal appearance and
His character ; and as for age, we judge
165 It borders five and twenty at the most.
His dress was suitable for drawing-room,
It being easy light and rich. He wore
It with a dignity and grace that caused
The gentle hearts to beat when he was near
170 With greater speed than usual, for it must
Be known that Bertrand was a fav'rite at
The court of Anjou, full as much because
Of personal appearance as of rank.
- But Anjou speaks as Bertrand bows before
175 The trio, thus : " My son ? " To which the heir
Returns, " Your grace ? " " Your future sire in law."
With this Lōrd Bértrand bows to Normandy,
Though motionless remains his countenance.
But Normandy extends his hand and says :
180 " My son approach : I trust the filial
Affection you bestow upon the ones
Who bore and reared you will not wane, but that
Your heart may propagate another love,
That Catherine my daughter may possess.
185 I hope the heart will not be satisfied,
But claim another for its warm embrace,
That I may have the pleasure of your love."
- " I thank your grace," was Bertrand's answer, but
So frigid was his manner that the Duke
190 Of Anjou said, " Tis strange he is so cold
And undemonstrative," remarking to
His wife, who signified concurrence. Then
His grace of Normandy continued, though
He marked the icy manner of the heir :
195 " I long to see you as my son, and shall

Be overjoyed to see the union of
Our houses and our arms." Then turning to
The Duke and Duchess he resumed his speech :

- " Your graces I will leave with much regret
200 Your castle home upon the morrow ; but
I carry in my thoughts a multitude
Of pleasing recollections of your kind
Attentions to my servants and myself.
I hope occasion will be kind enough
205 To furnish me an opportunity
To compensate your graces for the pains
By entertaining you at Normandy."
" A pleasure which we doubtless would enjoy,"
Replied the host, who rising said, " Your grace
Will please excuse us for a period.
210 Our duties call and we must answer them."
And Normandy responded instantly,
" Assuredly ; do not detain yourself
On my account."

- With ceremony due
The ducal pair retired : their noble guest
215 Soliloquized before a window thus :
" So Catherine my child the match is made ;
And yet I must confess it is not all
Your happiness that I include in this
Betrothal of your hand. The broad estate.
220 The stalwart arms, the influence and wealth
Of Anjou have assisted in the choice.
I have surpassingly succeeded by
My skill in making matters wealthy for
Myself. But notwithstanding, who could wish
225 A better husband than the heir : his fine
Physique and handsome face, his intellect,
His pleasant manners—all unite, and with
As many tongues proclaim his excellence.
Tomorrow I return to Normandy
230 To tell my child the joy in store for her."
With these remarks concluded he withdrew.

SECTION SECOND.

The ladies had withdrawn, and so had all
But Lord Augustus, Arnaud, and the heir.

The first and last arose and walked to where
 235 The son of Anjou sat. A look of deep
 Dissatisfaction was upon his face.
 His back was to the barons, and his thoughts
 Were running free and easy as we see.

"How cool this is; my father has betrothed
 240 My puny self unto the daughter of
 The Duke of Normandy. What liberty!
 Am I a child my father can engage
 My hand to any one he likes? No doubt
 The lady will be suitable in most
 245 Respects; but that is not the question; tis;
 The principle involved: for I am old
 Enough to choose a wife without behest
 And interference of my sire. I can't
 Afford to challenge his resentment by
 250 Refusing to obey. It makes me wild
 To have him act without consulting me
 Upon the matter:—so imperious!

"My Lord," Augustus said, "allow me to
 Congratulate you at this happy time,
 255 And hope your future will be pleasant as
 Your past."

"Accept concurring sentiments
 My lord," the other supplemented; but
 The heir exclaimed, with fever in his voice,

"To both of you my hearty thanks are due;
 260 But gentlemen you do not recollect
 That I have not been counselled in the case.
 My father has betrothed me, but without
 My wish opinion or consent: it is,
 To be pronounced in sentiment, a shame.
 The least his grace could do would be to ask
 265 The tenor of my feelings; even that
 He has not done, or hinted such. I feel
 As though my manhood was debased that like
 A servant I am ordered to be married!"

"Oh hush my lord." Augustus interposed,
 270 His grace might hear you speak!"

"I scarcely know
 That I am speaking so incensed I have
 Been made," replied the reckless heir, as he
 Arose and paced the floor. Augustus then

275 With mild advice observed :

“ Remember that
His grace knows best : he plans for your ascent
Upon the mount of fortune, and assure
Yourself that he will soon enthrone
His son upon a lofty eminence
280 In life, providing that his son does not
Pervert his course. His projects all matured
He strives to make your happiness secure ;
Nor would he wish to bind you for your life
To one who would a wretched consequence
285 Of married state effect. But rest assured
That naught but happiness will issue from
Your marriage with the house of Normandy.”

While speaking there appeared upon the scene
A page, who waited till the baron ceased,
290 Then bowing said, “ Will Lord Augustus wait
Upon his grace within the business room ? ”
“ Directly I will go,” Augustus said,
“ I pray excuse my absence gentlemen.”

“ Adieu my lord ! ” with courteous assent
295 The others spoke, and bowed in unison.

“ Proceed ! ” Augustus ordered, and withdrew,
Preceded by the page in livery.

“ My lord,” said Bertrand, “ how do you regard
The circumstance.” The baron thus replied :
300 “ From quite a different stand-point I am sure :
For I should not object at all to such
A favorable affair ; would bound with joy
If it were I. and thank his grace with all
My heart. Imagine what will come to pass !

305 The two estates united ; ample lands ;
The treasury full ; the massive fortresses ;
A thousand horse ; ten thousand infantry ;
Capacious rivers, and the forests rich —
Why you could emulate the splendor of
310 The king, and rank the highest of the peers.”

While these remarks were spoken Bertrand eyed
The speaker with a look of strange concern
Upon his face : then when the peer had ceased
He raised himself, and leaning forward spoke
315 With earnestness and vigor in his voice.

- “ Would all this tinsel buy my happiness !
What if the conjugal relations should
Not be as I would wish ; suppose my wife
And I should writhe in quarrels and disputes ;
320 Would not the demons of Inferno think
That they had blundered in their residence,
And make their nests within our very midst ?
If I should rule with sway of iron it would
Not help the case. Such life is misery !
325 My Duchess an aristocratic slave,
My presence shun with fear ; my children shrink
From my embrace, and powerless would be
My efforts to restrain their minds because
Of her commanding influence. For such
330 Is often the result of marriages
Where love is wanting, but where wealth is not.”
Lord Arnaud now began to look alarmed,
As rose the heir, and pacing back and forth,
With scarce a pause resumes his fierce remarks.
335 “ I shudder at the very thought, and dread
The evil consequence of such a match.
How much would all my princely wealth be worth
With circumstances raised to such a pitch,
And I upon a bed of sickness laid ;
340 To see the grudging ministrations of
My Duchess — cold and careless of my pain,
Indifference proving by her heedlessness.
I could not make her love me ; threats are vain
And punishments are powerless to make
345 A bosom swell with pity or to wet
An eye with grief. Imagine such a state ;
With fever in my blazing eye ; my form
Distorted with the tortures of disease !
Why even peasants have their humble lives
350 Adorned by fondness of their loving wives ;
And so do those of high degree as well,
Whose hands are sold for love, not gold and hell !”
“ Be still my lord ! ” cried Arnaud, on whose face
An aspect of alarm was rooted deep.
355 But Bertrand heeded not the cautious lord.
“ When sickness lays them low they feel the soft
And cooling hand of wife or child
In tender pity laid upon the brow,

- And loving eyes with tears bedimmed reveal
 360 Affliction, and the trembling voice betrays
 Its deep solicitude. Such love exists
 Where hearts as well as hands are leagued.
 If I had all the wealth of Nineveh within
 My grasp and racked with pain or grief,
 365 I'd turn my face and beg the deity
 On high to take it all and render an
 Affectionate devoted wife to me
 In place. Oh ghastly gold, thou ally of
 The Devil, in whose ranks enlisted to
 370 Deprave the hearts of men : corrupting hook,
 By Moloch forged upon the anvils of
 The black infernal pit, to grapple men
 And women from the crystal waters of
 Their innocence, (" Be still ! " the peer exclaimed,
 375 Defiling vitiating all the pure
 And honest meditations of their hearts
 And noble actions of their lives ! More terrible
 Art thou than ranks of steel ; more subtle than
 A treacherous cur ; more fascinating than
 380 A serpent's gaze, more venomous than his fangs ;
 More deadly than the eye of basilisk,
 For with its yellow blaze it sears the soul ;
 Its ring more fatal than the toll of doom
 Unto a criminal's ear : — Oh curséd be
 385 Thy very name abhorrent gold ! "

He ceased,

- And dropped into a chair. The other was
 With consternation mute. He had essayed
 To check the rash young lord, but all in vain.
 He would not listen to him, but with fierce
 390 Expression, unpremeditated phrase,
 He hurled invectives at the object of
 His wrath, nor knew the deep significance
 Of what he said.

- When he had ceased a page
 Appeared, and in the name of Anjou asked
 395 If Arnaud would attend upon his grace.
 " I will be promptly there," was his reply :
 Then to the heir observed ; " Do not my lord
 Express your feelings quite so violently.
 If brought to hearing of his grace it would

- 400 Provoke his indignation ; for you know
 Opinions are not always revered. ”
 Then bowing he repaired unto the Duke ;
 And as he leaves the heir in moody frame
 Of mind and countenance depressed, we bid
 405 The drawing room and occupant adieu,
 Allow an interval of time to pass,
 And meet again on premises elsewhere.

THIRD SECTION.

- The Duke of Normandy has left for home :
 Arrangements have been made, the date is fixed
 410 For Bertraud's wedding — Sixty days from hence.
 When next we see the Duke of Anjou and
 His son, they sit conversing in his grace's room —
 His business room, where ceremony is
 Observed but carelessly, for servants come
 415 And barons go at will. The trouble is
 The doors are hung too eas'ly, and the floor
 Is carpeted too softly for the good
 Of all concerned ; a fact so obvious
 That one must wonder that the Duke
 420 Allowed such freedom in the room we see.
 But listen, for his grace prepares to speak.
 “ My son, I sent for you to ask advice :
 My Treasurer Dumain, you know is dead :
 As now it is a fortnight since he breathed
 425 His last, I must not waste the time in doubts
 Of who shall be the one to fill his place. ”
 But who is that who turns with softest touch
 The knob, and pulls aside the door, while speaks
 The Duke ; then enters, glides behind a screen
 430 With step as soft as time's advances ? Ah !
 Ambition is the monarch of the soul,
 The ruling passion both for good and ill,
 Aloft it stands the reason's charioteer,
 And onward drives the chargers of the will.
 435 The spy behind the screen is Arnaud.

But

The Duke without a halt continues thus :

“ But still I hesitate, and waver in
 My choice between Augustus, Arnaud and

- The rest. So give me your advice without
 440 Reserve ; dispel the biased feelings of
 A friend ; consider that the office is
 A trying one, that taxes skill and nerve ;
 Reflect upon the merits of the men,
 Their honesty, ability, and facts
 445 That prove their competence for such a post —
 Then counsel me in all sincerity
 That my decision may be justly made.”
 As he concluded Bertrand turned and looked
 His father in the face with earnestness.
 450 “ Your grace I do sincerely beg of you
 That Arnand be not made the treasurer.”
 “ Indeed !” returned the Duke, “ what makes you thus
 Disturbed about the gentleman ?” To which
 His son replied :
 “ I have no charge to make,
 455 But simply this : There is a something in
 The nervous twiteling of his cheek denotes
 A spirit of uneasiness ; his eye
 Cannot be met at steady gaze, and would
 Betray a conscience ill at ease ; his lip
 460 Is curled sarcastically — in truth a scroll
 From which I trace his secret character —
 Corrupt deceitful and unprincipled ;
 A man who would deceive a bosom friend,
 That by the act he might augment his gain.
 465 Dislike with him is milder word for hate,
 Although the consequence is just the same ;
 And should the wretched victim fall within
 That dark circumference of mortal spite, he’s doomed.
 No pleasure has he in the lofty flights
 470 Of intellect : luxuriant excess
 His only joy ; for Nature has no charms
 For him ; her lovely countenance is but
 A tedious pageant in his selfish eyes.
 Indifferent to affection, all he seeks
 475 And labors for in life is to exalt
 His name and fortune at whatever cost.
 Although of mild exterior, his rage
 When thwarted burns within unseen
 And fierce. Within that secret grasp there lurks
 480 The lubricated dirk of flattery. —

"Enough!" said Anjou stopping him before
 He could continue. "Your indictment has
 A ring of argument, and carries weight.
 But still the sentence of your judgment may
 485 Be wrong." At which his son replied with warmth:
 "But sterling judgment laughs at evidence,
 And may convict with justice in the face
 Of all."

To which the Duke replied, "Tis done;
 Augustus shall be Treasurer. I have
 490 Another matter of importance to
 Confer about, so let us take a walk
 Upon the terrace lawn and talk of that."

With these remarks they both arose and left
 The room. When they had gone the baron stepped
 495 From out behind the friendly screen. His face
 Displayed tumultuous passions charging through
 His frame. His fingers closed, his teeth were set,
 And through the orifices hissed his rage.

"The blatant wretch! to thus defame my name!
 500 I might have been the treasurer of this
 Important dukedom, rich and powerful,
 In rank but second to the duke himself,
 But for this meddling, lying, infamous
 And slandering young heir. If he were not
 505 The son of Anjou I would run him through,
 And make him feel my hatred, not by words,
 But more substantially. I have it now!"

That door again! Augustus entered just
 As Arnaud uttered the concluding words.
 510 "What is it that you have my lord?" he asked;
 But all that he could learn was briefly this:

"A simple plan matured, but which would be
 Of little int'rest to yourself." Then down
 They sat in silence, for Augustus was
 515 Too courteous to press the question more.

The Duke re-entered, saw the barons there,
 Determined to apprise Augustus of
 The office he would fill. Then leaning by
 A window he composed a little speech
 520 To grace the matter.

While he stood, the first
 To notice him was Arnaud. Through his brain

Revenge went galloping with fierce dispatch.
And thus he muttered to himself :

“ The time
Has come to strike.” Then to Augustus said ;
525 “ My lord you did not hear what Bertrand had
To say about the Duke, alluding to
The case with Normandy ? ”

“ Why no,” replied
The future Treasurer, “ I did not hear.”

“ You would have been surprised at his remarks :
530 His violent language was of such a tone
I begged him to desist. I feared his grace
Would hear, and boil with wrath, so loudly spoke
His son.”

“ But did he disrespectfully
Pronounce against his grace’s action,” asked
535 Augustus ; but with villainy upon
His features spoke the baron :

“ Well, he said
That he was ordered like a servant to
Be married ; spoke of those who sell their hands
For love not gold ; again, ‘ where hearts as well
540 As hands are joined ; ’ then fell to cursing gold
With such a vim I begged him to be calm.
Of course you see that when he curses gold
He does not mean the yellow colored coin
That jingles with its fellows in the purse,
545 But what it represents : you see my lord ? ”

A fortune waits the artist who can paint
A diabolical expression such as clothed
The features of the baron. Villainy
Satanic revelled on his countenance,
550 And burned within the pupil of his eye.

“ You surely do not mean to intimate
That Bertrand cursed his father under guise
Of cursing gold ? ” Augustus asked the peer
In anxious tone.

“ But this is what he said ;
555 ‘ Accursed be thy name abhorrent gold ! ’
What could he mean if he did not intend
To curse his father through the medium
Of gold ? I certainly interpret that
He would imply his grace of Anjou is

560 Of avaricious nature. "

" Not so loud ! "

Augustus cautioned, as he glanced around ;
But as his sight was not the best he did
Not notice that the Duke was standing in
A shadow by the window, which concealed

565 Him from a hasty glance. Twas raining too.

" He then continued in this strain ? "

" Until

I begged him to be still, besought him to
Be calm ; for such a ranting I have not
Been auditor for many years — against

570 The gold but really 'gainst the sire. "

" Dear me ! "

Augustus murmured. " 'Tis too bad : but let
Us take a walk upon the terrace lawn,
That we may not be overheard. "

" Proceed

My lord," said Arnaud. By the arm he led,
575 And almost pushed Augustus through the door,—
A different one from that by which the Duke
Was standing.

Leaving them to find the rain,

And Anjou to a meditation brief,

We halt a moment in our story, and

580 Consider. Which was worse ? For Bertrand to

Declare opinion as severe as he

Had done, or Arnaud to betray a trust ?

The object of the first was just, but that

Of him who spoke the last was base revenge.

585 Perhaps advice like this would suit the case,

Although it would apply to Bertrand least : ,

Oh slander not the truth by telling that,

Which may be truth but yet should not be told,

For cowards often tell un-called for facts,

590 When braver men would pause to be bold.

FOURTH SECTION.

The Duke of Anjou roused himself and said.

" A hint to understanding minds reveals

A wealth of information. Does my son

Assume the right to question my commands,

- 595 And to my barons doubt and analyze
 My motives, action, and my character,
 Until they warn him to be careful lest
 His violent language should assail my ears?"
- With anger in the act he struck a bell.
- 600 A page responded, and the Duke exclaimed,
 "I wish to see Lord Bertrand instantly!"
- The lord of Anjou was not prone to lose
 His temper often, but when once aroused
 The mild pacific aspect disappeared,
- 605 And left an angry animal to take
 The place of rational man. While waiting for
 His son he countermarched and muttered thus:
 "To talk of me in such a manner! why
 If he were not my very flesh and blood
- 610 I would not hesitate to thrust him through
 Insulting stripling that he is. Perhaps
 His habit is to thus degrade me to
 My officers within the palace walls."
- While talking to himself his son appeared.
- 615 "Your grace?" he asked, with wonder on his face
 Alarmed at such behavior in his sire.
- "I see you're here!" the Duke remarked, but so
 Incensed he scarcely could contain himself.
- "What do you wish?" his heir politely asked.
- 620 With fury in the current of his speech
 His grace replied:
- "I understand that you
 Have soiled my name before my baron's eyes,
 My motives criticised, integrity
 Denied, accused me of dishonesty,
- 625 And with disloyal conversations so
 Impaired the confidence existing in
 The court of Anjou, that you should not live
 To see the serious result if you
 Were not my son and heir! But why upon
- 630 A chair subside and hide thy whitened face?
 Then it is so?" His son was crushed into
 A seat beneath the unexpected blow.
 With stunning force the recollection of
 His angry tirade smote his brain. The Duke
- 635 Sincerely loved his son, and but for that
 Would probably have harshly treated him,

Recovering himself a moment he
 Remarked,

“ Remain within this room until
 I have composed myself sufficiently
 640 To come again : I fear that I would do
 An action that I would regret as soon
 As done. Remember to remain ! ” Then to
 The page who waited, curtly said, “ Begone ! ”
 The Duke withdrew, and Bertrand, stupefied
 645 By such an unanticipated stroke
 Of dire calamity, expressed himself
 In this most sorrowful soliloquy.

“ Oh misery, thy poignant dart doth pierce
 The deep mysterious chords of love and life !
 650 But why repine and plunge my soul in grief ?
 I am not solitary in my woe.
 On every hand the pall of sorrow hangs :
 It can be seen upon the countenance
 Of peasant and of prince. The weary drudge
 655 Whose bread is penury and whose pastime toil ;
 Whose sleep is haunted by the spectre of
 A lean and starving ghost ; the royal wretch
 Who treason doth surmise among his peers,
 Who fears and dreams of daggers, poisons — all
 660 Have share alike with me the sorrows of
 A wretched world. ”

He ceased, and as the words
 Were fading from his mind, the peer returned.
 As quick as lightning rends the midnight gloom
 The situation dawned on Bertrand's mind.
 365 Without a movement, hissing through his teeth,
 The heir saluted him : “ So you have come
 To aggravate my woe ; you treacherous — ”

“ What's this my lord that you accuse me of ? ”
 The baron asked, but guessed the truth.

“ You have betrayed my confidence, and to
 670 His grace imparted conversations which
 You knew were for your ears alone, and not
 To be repeated. Oh deceitful cur ! ”
 And Bertrand hurled the fierce invectives at
 675 The villain with a will.

“ Beware my lord,
 Or I will give you cause ! ” said Arnaud then.

A sudden spasm of convulsive rage
Had rent the baron's brain and blinded him.

" You are too flattered with yourself by far,"

680 The heir replied, continuing his calm

Demeanor which exasperated all

The more the noble, trembling in his rage ;

" I do not countenance your puny threats."

Then Arnaud answered, but with labored voice :

685 " You would a quarrel pick ; I see your point ! "

As this was spoken (Oh that door again !)

His grace returned unseen ; for both were so

Absorbed by passion's blinding mist they knew

Not what environed them.

" I care not what

690 You see ; you have betrayed me, that's enough :

And raised between my father and myself

A barrier that may not be dissolved

Without a serious trouble." Bertrand spoke

With vehemence. The baron thus returned :

695 " You think you are alone in this respect ;

But you have slandered me unto the Duke

In manner both outrageous and unjust.

What have I done to you that you should speak

Unto his grace with such an influence,

700 As to destroy effectually the hopes

That I had entertained of being Treasurer ? "

" Who told you this ? " inquired the startled heir.

" It does not matter who," the peer replied.

" The subject of our conversation is

705 Our mutual criminations."

" Dirty spy ! "

Responded Bertrand, turning up his nose,

" I told the truth, but not to injure you :

I have my interest in this broad estate ;

And for that very interest it was most

710 Expedient that I have a word upon

A matter of extreme importance as

The Treasurer."

But Arnaud made reply

In heated voice : " In doing such you have

With ruthless tongue my chances of a high

715 Promotion so destroyed, my character

Besmirched, my reputation injured, that

- I never can be trusted by the Duke
 To any office of importance, but
 Must ever be a cipher in the court."
- 720 To which the heir replied in haste :
 " And you by faithless act have told his grace
 The conversations I have held with you,
 In violation of a trust imposed."
 Then sharply came the answer back :
 " And you,
- 725 By vile calumnious report have so
 Defamed my name —"
 But Bertrand broke him off
 Before the period :
 " I weighed thee right ;
 My scales of insight and perception are
 Too finely balanced thus to be unjust."
- 730 Then rising to his feet he sternly said,
 " Thy soul is tainted, and thy conscience blunt :
 No crime has visited thy heart perhaps,
 But that is opportunity's neglect ;
 And should occasion offer thou wouldst not
- 735 A moment hesitate but feed thyself
 With fruit that others glean. Thine honesty
 Is girdled by thy greed ; enveloped in
 That darkened circlet dwells thy soul confined."
 With look and gesture furious the wretch
- 740 Exclaimed, " A lie, a base malicious lie ! "
 In briefer space of time than takes to write
 The two had drawn their swords with ringing whip,
 And crossed. Before a single passage could
 Be made a whistling hiss was heard ; their swords
- 745 Were dashed apart, and in astonishment
 They turned to see the Duke of Anjou there.
 " Beware !" he said severely. " sheathe your swords :
 I'll have no fighting here." Then speaking to
 The baron thus, he summed the matter up :
- 750 Lörd Arnãud, I have found you guilty of
 Offence against my son and me He had
 The right to counsel me as he would judge
 Correct. Our conversation you have heard
 By listening like a spy : I cannot find
- 755 Excuse for that. I overheard you put
 The lie to Anjou's heir, not hearing as

- A spy, but stood unnoticed in the room.
 But he who tells my son he lies, insults
 My training and reproaches me. My son
 760 May do you wrong, but I am here to see
 That justice shall be rendered to the wronged.
 Depart ; collect your goods and put them on
 Your horse, and my dominions leave. Begone !
 I want no more of you."
- The peer retired
- 765 In sad and moody frame of mind, without
 A word. When he had gone his grace observed
 With milder countenance :
 " But you my son
 Cannot escape a punishment for your
 Misdeeds. You have impaired the discipline
 770 That is the groundwork of our martial laws,
 And must not be imperiled, cost what may.
 In order that you may have time to think
 What you have done, and that I may forget
 The wrong you have committed in my sight,
 775 You must withdraw from Anjou for a month,
 And wander where you will, that you may thus
 Be brought to realize the danger of
 Objecting to my will in such a way."

FIFTH SECTION.

- The next we see of Bertrand, is, with hands
 780 Behind his back, he wanders aimlessly
 Around, through room and hall, in reverie.
 " A month, one month of roving to and fro.
 An exile for the period, though the heir
 Of Anjou. Had I wished to take a slight
 785 Vacation 't would have been denied ; for such
 I recently desired : my father though,
 Saw fit my wishes to refuse. Then why
 Do I object ? Because it beats against
 The current of a mortal's life to be
 790 Compelled. The very suicide, that's plucked
 From out the water would bewail his fate
 If doomed to death by drowning. Well, I must
 Retire to deep obscurity, while on
 Her course the queen of night revolves upon

- 795 Her monthly wax and wane, to hide her face
 And re-appear in flaming luster clothed.
 It will not be so evil after all ;
 For I can spend my time in many ways :
 I'll hunt and fish, and sport with peasant youths
 800 And maids. But none shall know my name or rank
 Disguised as gentleman of means, I'll pass
 My time among the rustics, and enjoy
 The pleasures of a pastoral career,
 And innocent enjoyment with the swains.
 805 Some district unfamiliar I will choose,
 Where I am stranger to the peasantry.
 Ah well, what matters it : a dungeon is
 A palace if you choose to make it so."
 When thus he had concluded he was in
 810 A room alone, reclining on a couch
 In solemn frame of mind. But Arnaud now
 Was ready to be off, and searching for
 The heir to hurl a parting word at him.
 " Adieu Lõrd Bẽrtrãnd ! I congratulate
 815 Yõu thãt you are protected by your sire.
 If we should meet in solitude your corpse
 Would quickly need a grave and epitaph.
 But no ! what satisfaction would there be
 In killing ? Listen to my speech. If you
 820 Should fall within my grip I would not run
 You through, but keep you for a sharper fate
 Than that. "
- " You speak as though I were a child
 And not a man," said Bertrand with a sneer.
 " But hear me what I say," his foe returned ;
 825 Unless I act in self-defence I will
 Not touch you to your harm :—but this I'll do :
 Your life so wretched I will make that you
 Will hate to live : — "
- " Desist. " Lord Bertrand cried,
 Provoked beyond endurance ; yet retained
 830 His seat, and would not deign to rise, and show
 The slightest deference to the peer, who stood
 As page before his lord : " Your threats are vain,
 And fall abortive on a listless ear. "
- " Oh you can sneer. " the baron still went on
 835 Persistingly, " But I will have revenge.

Anticipate the day when life will be
 A weighty burden on your groaning back,
 And in your crazy desperation put
 An end to mortal ills by violent act.

840 I would not slaughter you and soil my hands,
 But make you save me trouble —”

Bertrand broke

Him off: “ Oh quit your talk; begone! ”

But still

The exile plied his tongue, and hissed the words
 Between his fettered teeth, as through the door

845 He passed :—

“ For I will make you kill yourself. ”

CANTO II.

THE RESOLUTION.

"I'll face the world and all its woe."

FIRST SECTION.

- The monarch of the day retreats before
The forces of the night. Reluctantly
Withdrawing from the field, with face to foe
He step by step relinquishes the ground,
5 And down behind horizon's friendly shade
He shelter takes in mighty solitude.
The scene that is presented to the eye
Is beautiful indeed; a garden rich,
With foliage and flower thick and sweet.
10 We now are walking in the Normandy
Estate, the garden of the Duke; a spot
Where nature bloomed beneath the hand of man.
But while we marvel at its beauty, from
The shade there steps a charming maiden, sweet
15 As nature ever fashioned virgin form.
Philosopher! pray tell why man is rough
And harsh, but woman beautiful?
"Ah man,
Thy God created thee for stern intents:
To labor, plan and execute designs:
20 To sway the sceptre of domestic rule;
To bear the burden of the home and state;
Defend the weak, and punish the depraved.
For duties such he has endowed thee with,
An intellect and frame sufficient for
25 The purpose: understanding deep, a breadth
Of thought, creative force; a brain
That teems with reason, glows with intellect,

- And bubbles forth refreshment to mankind.
 A vigorous physique he has bestowed
 30 For thy necessity : although abused
 Too often, when developed will assume
 The texture of Damascus steel. And as
 The rugged rock, unlovely, will retain
 Its shape, though fiercely lashed on ocean strand—
 35 So man, of rugged countenance, preserves
 The strength of features, firm and noble, with
 But little change from manhood to the grave.
 “How different woman’s sphere : tis hers to make
 The home a paradise and life utopia ;
 40 To smooth the furrows from the brow of care,
 And purge the gloomy vision from the eye.
 Her mind possesses keen perception, but
 Without enduring strength to bear the great
 Responsibilities of life, or power
 45 To greet despair and conquer foe on foe.
 Her form is fragile, lovely as a rose,
 The fountain of the race, the wonder of
 The seraphim on high. Her face defies
 Comparison among the labyrinths
 50 Of nature, and is peerless in the vast
 And wondrous works of God. And as the rose,
 Attired in charming ornament, will cause
 The hoary rock to wonder, and despair
 Of rivalling its beauty, so does this
 55 Enchanting creature captivate the heart
 Of man. Above the superficial pomp,
 External grace, her spirit ranks. The meek
 Unselfish soul and loving heart, revealed
 In look and gesture, animate the face
 60 And form with wondrous beauty, and augment
 Her presence with angelic attributes.
 But when the hurricane of time has scourged
 Them both, the rock will proudly lift its crest
 Above the waves, and though before esteemed
 65 A harsh unlovely bulk, he rises now
 Majestic from the tide to claim applause.
 The rose ! ah where is that ? It lives ; but shed
 A tear above the faded, blasted head !
 “Remember, man, your destiny is toil,
 70 A physical and mental strain ; for you

- Are qualified by nature for the task —
But woman's empire is the hearth and home :
And her design should be to elevate
Her strong protector. Though her life should be
75 Encumbered with anxiety, fatigues,
And household tasks and burdens, she should strive
To cast a beam of sunshine in his soul :
For he is vexed and tempted on the harsh
And unrestricted road of life as she
80 Is not, whose province is the guarded home.
And he should cast his stronger arm around
Her feebler frame, defend it from the shocks
Of daily struggle, — she whose office is
To cheer his life ; her efforts praise, and thus
85 Appreciate the love she bears for him.
But to our narrative : the lady walks
Upon the garden path with dainty step,
And thus soliloquises to herself : —
“ Oh lovely twilight ! fast the shadows fall
90 To sleep. The balm of peace on nature has
Been laid with gentle touch, and on its breast
The landscape into slumbers has been soothed.
All life has gone to rest. A day has died :
And never shall its light be gazed upon
95 Again by God or man. Its joys shall live
Within the memory, to be recalled
As pleasing sights : its sorrows too have gone ;
Within the mind they countermarch like an
Abiding guard. The gloom of night enwraps
100 In somber hue the sleeping world. See how
The gorgeous moon asserts its presence by
The splendor of its countenance, and like
Heroic souls has brighter grown within
The deeper gloom. Behold the comet rise
105 Behind the fringe of trees, and flame upon
The inky ether sea. Superb display !
A captivating sight ! What can it mean ?
Oh mighty symbol of impending fate !
What burning secret dwells within the deep.
110 Mysterious mass that marches by the stars
With dignity sublime ? this oracle
That strives to rival the great orb of day.
I fancy 'tis the sign of some great joy

- Prepared to cheer the hearts of young and old.
 115 Perchance it is the shade of some unkind
 Disaster that forewarns impending death;
 Perchance it is the waving of the blade,
 Before the fatal stroke that steals the breath."

SECOND SECTION.

- "Tis time for Abbot Augustine to come,"
 120 Said Catherine, the daughter of the Duke
 Of Normandy, "and hear confession from
 Me. Ah, a stranger here!"
 A cowed monk
 Appeared, while she was lost in reverie,
 And rapidly approached. It was not he
 125 Who was habitual at even tide,
 To hear the simple story of her sins.
 "Good evening, father; please disclose your name.
 That we may not be strangers. How is it
 That Abbot Augustine has not appeared,
 130 And you have come in place of him?"
 "The name
 I bear is Father Charles," returned the monk:
 "The Abbot Augustine is kept to-night
 From waiting on you, as the bishop paid
 A visit to the cloister today,
 135 Which has engaged his time so much, that he
 Requested me to meet you here, and thus
 Explain his absence."
 What familiar voice
 Is that? It echoes on the lively ear
 With strange accentuation, as a chord
 140 Of long forgotten music peals among
 The chambers of the brain. The friar's hood
 Conceals his face, so we must wait and watch.
 "I feared the Abbot might be ill," said she.
 "Oh not at all!" the monk replied in haste;
 145 "The service at the chapel has enjoined
 His absence there a period."
 "Is not
 The Abbot Augustine a righteous man?"
 Exclaimed the heiress in her ardent praise,
 "His holy life my admiration stirs.

- I always was persuaded he should be
A layman, not a monk, that by his zeal
The cause he might augment, by holding some
Exalted office in the state; for such
155 Integrity would be a jewel in
The coronet of any duke. But now
His virtues are obscured by stony walls,
And in the Abbey glows oblivious
The hidden light."
- "Perhaps you'r right my child,"
160 Returned the monk, whose face was turned to her,
But hidden from our view by folds of cowl.
"But now be seated daughter, that I may
Impart some news that doubtless will surprise."
"Tis pleasant I should hope," returned the girl.
165 "Perhaps." The curt remark was not the kind
To foster peace of mind at all. "Have you
Been told that you would shortly be espoused
Unto the heir of Anjou?" asked the monk.
"Why father! no;" exclaimed the wondering maid.
170 "Tis strange indeed: I do not understand.
Has not his grace informed you of his late
Betrothal of your hand?"
- "No father; he
Has not!" she said, her face a subject for
A sketch.
- "Then listen child," began the friar;
175 "I lately left the monastery, near
The country seat of Anjou's princely duke:
And while I dwelt within those sacred walls
I heard confession from the dukedom's heir;
And much I sorrow to relate what he
180 Confessed to me, with careless speech, of all
His manifold iniquities which he
Had perpetrated. Sad, yes very sad!
He said he would amend, but broke his word,
And plunged the deeper into vice. I begged
185 Him to consider what he did, for oft
He came, and I refused him not; although
I knew he came for sport, but tried to wield
An influence upon his wasted life.
With jovial companions he would charge
190 His system with the wine, until he reeked,

And staggered in the streets in shameful plight."

A tremor of convulsive anguish shook
The soul of Catherine. With eyesight fixed
Upon the ground in glassy stare, her face
195 As pallid as the brow of death, she breathed
These faintly uttered words :

" Oh wretchedness
Personified! is this the fate I must
Expect? to dukes and princes vended like
An animal! My father shall be told."
200 The hand of Father Charles is closing tight!
But why? This action is extremely strange.
" But tell me father," Lady Catherine
Inquired; "why do you thus impart to me
This information? Are'nt you bound to keep
205 The secrets of the ones who trust you with
Their confidence?"

To which the monk replied:
" I know my child; but you forget my aim;
For bound unto this man your life would be
As though t were blasted by the breath of Hell!
210 He soon would be as though a demon had
Escaped his chains to slumber at your side.
Do not you see my motive child? have not
I acted right in thus exposing his
Corruptions to yourself, to save you from
215 A fearful fate in time? and so, doth not
The motive vindicate the act?"

The maid
Was silent for a moment, then replied
With warmth; " I thank you Father Charles for your
Solicitude, and hope my gratitude
220 To prove by serving you." Her face sufficed
To guarantee her words. " But listen, child,
He said, " A stern injunction I impose;
All word about our conversation must
Avoid your lips. I charge you not to say
225 A word about the matter to a soul,
But meditate, and consummate your plans."
" But tell me Father," Catherine returned
In anxious tone of voice, " What shall I do?
Can not you counsel me to act?"

- The monk
- 230 Replied, "Impossible: I am not versed
 About the discipline his grace observes,
 Nor of relation with the Anjous; for
 I might advise a foolish act because
 Of ignorance of circumstances. You
- 235 Are best alone."
- A sigh escaped the lips
 Of Catherine as thus he spoke. A voice
 Was heard among the shrubbery at this
 Depressing moment, calling,
- "Catherine!
- My Lady Catherine!" who called response,
 240 "I come my dearest nurse!" then to the monk—
 "Adieu good Father Charles; I thank you in
 The warmth of mind and heart for your sincere,
 Unbounded kindness unto me."
- The nurse
- Appeared, emerging from the shadows of
 245 The trees, and said, "My Lady!"
- And the girl
- Returned, "Good Nurse, Confessor Charles."
- The monk
- Inclined his figure slightly, but the nurse
 Replied with court'sy, "Pleased I am to meet
 You Father Charles,"
- And Catherine observed
- 250 With gentle looks of love,
- "My nurse has been
 A mother in my lonely years: in time
 Of sorrow she has been a comforter,
 A soother of my childish griefs; for there
 Are times when father's love, however strong,
- 255 Will fail to pacify a child's distress.
 A woman's faculties are tested then,
 And from the infant heart extends a bond
 That firmly grasps a woman's sympathy."
- To which the hooded friar replied with bow,
- 260 "I am delighted you are favored so."
- The nurse addressed her mistress with remark,
 "His grace your father wishes you to go
 To him."
- "Then I must leave," the heiress said,

" Good evening Father Charles ! "

- The friar replied,
- 265 " Good evening daughter : faithful nurse, adieu ! "
- The monk stood watching them until they passed
Beyond his sight, then fiercely tossing back
His hood, with knotted fists he bruised the air,
And screamed with pent up fury in his voice :
- 270 " And so, the howling hounds of vengeance are
Cut loose ! Success ! now let them go, and waste
The path they tread ; so long as Bertrand is
The victim of their thirsty teeth I care
But little what and where they devastate ! "
- 275 'The voice no longer is a mystery ;
The savage brute is Arnaud, in disguise.
Becoming calmer he resumed his seat.
" Four days ago I left the Aujous ; here
I am ; my life devoted to the cause
- 280 Of hate — to ruin all the hopes of him
Who thwarted my ambition, slandered me
With lying tongue, and caused my downfall from
His grace's favor. Once resolved upon
A scheme I bought this consecrated garb.
- 285 I knew the Abbot Augustine : to him
I went, and told him I had come to leave
A life of pleasure and of sin, and wished
To consecrate myself to holy things.
Of course he was surprised, but took me in.
- 290 I watched for opportunity, and when
The Bishop came the Abbot Augustine
Was in a plight : he had engaged to see
The Lady Catherine at certain time
To hear confession. Then the Bishop came,
- 295 And he at loss for what to do, until
I asked if I could be his messenger,
And tell the lady why he was detained.
As youngest I could easiest be spared
From that impressive ceremony ; but
- 300 He hesitated, then consented. So
I'm here ; determined, scheming — thirsting for
My adversary's soul : for I will make
Him kill himself in spite of all his sneers.
I will not be contented with his life,
- 305 But I shall hurl his soul unto its doom."

THIRD SECTION.

Our scene is shifted to the sitting-room
Of Normandy, and there we see the Duke.
His grace is seated reading, but he drops
The book observing,

“ Catherine should come :

- 310 I sent for her to tell the fortune I
Have stored for her. I know she will be pleased :
What woman lives without a yearning to
Become a happy wife, and thus fulfill
The law of marriage — noblest of divine
315 Conceptions yet essayed. No being formed
Of Earth's decaying substance could have thought
Of any plan or institution that
Would bear the shocks that matrimony has.
With Sabbath, hand in hand they rode above
320 The fall of man, the Deluge, heathenish
Abasements ; promises to live as long
As man exists and woman treads the earth.”

- When he had ceased soliloquising thus
His daughter entered. It must be confessed
325 That hers was not a cheerful frame of mind,
Nor was her manner blithe. His grace did not,
However, notice this but said to her,

- “ Come hither child, and sit beside my knee.
My daughter, I regret to speak to you
330 About a circumstance to give you joy
But bring me sorrow. It has been an aim
And object of my life to see you well
And nobly married. To this end I have
Selected for your husband one who is
335 Of noble birth and handsome countenance.

- “ My daughter, you with spirits young and rife
Have been the rainbow of my darkened life.
Your mother died when young, and I bereft.
Alone to stem the tide of life was left.
340 How much I lost no soul will ever know,
No tongue can speak the burden of my woe.
Then you were left me to console my grief,
And in distress bestow a sweet relief.
But now it seems as though my very soul
345 Must part with me and nothing can condole.

"My daughter I have promised you shall be
The wife of Bertrand, son of Anjou."

While
The Duke was speaking tempests stirred the soul
Of Catherine from every quarter of
350 Her being, storming and conflicting each
Against the other. Filial affection due
And consequent obedience; her own
Desires and just demands; her duty to
Her God, whose frown she feared, and knew it would
355 Be turned against such marriages — such thoughts.
Such fierce emotions — many more that can't
Be named — were struggling each with each, like birds
Of prey contending in mid air, or winds
In opposition that give lusty birth
360 To whirl-winds, water-spouts and scenes of death.
Her tongue was bound, but by an effort freed
From that enthrallment only whispered this:

"Oh father: has your grace betrothed me to
The gentleman?"

"I have," replied the Duke.
365 "But why conceal your face? Oh yes, I see,
Tis woman sure enough. But say my dear,
How does the prospect please you? Come, expose
Your face that I may read your mind."

But she
Was fearful of the consequence, and kept
370 Her face averted, and with desperate will
Controlled her voice sufficiently to say
At last,

"I must reflect your grace; it is
A subject that I need to meditate
Upon before the mind is fit to give
375 Its sentiments unto the tongue. Besides,
I am not well to-night: it robs me of
My usual cheerfulness."

Had she essayed
A sentence more her voice would have refused
To do its duty, and she feared his grace
380 Would hear the awful throbblings of her heart.
"Well then retire," said Normandy, in terms
Of gentleness, "and contemplate upon
The fortune that has smiled upon you so

Auspiciously."

- 385 "I will remember what
You say your grace," said Catherine, "Good night."
"Good night," the Duke responded, and resumed
His book, his daughter passing sadly out.
Poor Catherine! the bust exalted on
The lofty pedestal endures a far
390 Severer finishing than those whose ranks
Are lowly. Though it chafes beneath the blows
That fall, the master hand is conscious that
The peerless bust should have the greatest care.

FOURTH SECTION.

- Our scene reverts again, and we are in
395 The garden of the palace. Catherine
And Nurse are strolling on the walks, and by
Her voice we find our heroine is sad.
"My dearest nurse, I know not what to do:
I dare not frame an opposition to
400 His grace's will; but I must not consent
To this espousal unto Anjou's son."
"My lady," said the nurse in soothing tone
But firmly, "Do you not appreciate
The magnitude of kindness that his grace
405 Bestows upon you? Had he wished he might
Have married you to many dukes who would
Have been completely crazed with happiness
To have secured your hand. But they are old
Or cross or wicked, while the one his grace
410 Has carefully selected is so young
So handsome and withal so very rich,
That you should acquiesce without a word."
"Ah well!" responded Catherine in deep
Despair, "Be kind enough to leave me now:
415 For Father Charles approaches, and I wish
To make confession to him, so I will
Be soon again with you."
"I shall expect
You shortly," said the nurse, and disappeared.
"I wonder why he comes," she thought, "I did
420 Not send for him: but I am glad to see
Him though."

She sat upon the rustic bench
 And waited. Soon appeared the falcon, decked
 In pigeon's feathers, meek and docile as
 A dove.

" Good evening Father," said the maid.
 425 " Good evening daughter," he replied. " I've watched
 For many hours for you :—now what is there
 To tell?"

" There's nothing worthy to relate;
 Except that all is settled; I'm to be
 The wife of Anjou's son." She spoke it from
 430 A heavy heart, poor child.

" But have you not
 Protested to your father? surely he
 Would not compel you to become the wife
 Of one whose sins appal the light of day!"

435 " Oh no!" burst out the heiress in despair,
 " It cannot be that he would sell me to
 A life of wretchedness; he is too kind;
 His words are freighted with the impulse of
 A loving heart." Then pausing in her grief
 440 A moment she resumed with sternness,

" Still,
 The king of beasts is harmless till you cross
 His path. My father, inoffensive as
 The undulating sea, may storm with rage
 Confounding if aroused by violence
 445 Of passion. But he loves his child, and would
 Not sacrifice her happiness that whims
 Might be indulged he may be burdened with.
 Ah me, what shall I do!"

" My daughter strive
 To keep composed," the wretch observed, " and think
 450 Of your profession when adversity
 Has struck the tender sensibilities."
 And then the villain muttered to himself,
 " Oh how ingenious is revenge!"

Then said
 The heiress in despondent tone, " I will
 455 Request him to consider his resolve."

" I would," said he, " and by your graces seek
 To change his mind. With pleading tongue and terms
 Of love assail his purpose; thus compel

Him to repent the act: paternal love
460 Will then assert itself, and you your suit
Obtain."

To this the maid replied, "But what
If he refuses me!"

The man returned,
"I leave the answer to yourself my child."
And as he spoke the wolfish eyes were set
465 Upon her features with a greedy stare
As though to char her hidden soul.

She looked
Confused, distracted, passed her hand across
Her forehead, gazed in vacancy and said,
"Tis circumstances such as these that make
470 The lunatic. The mind confronted by
Determined evils strives to master them,
But often fails. The pitiless foes renew
The fierce assault, until the reason, vexed
Beyond its strength surrenders, and becomes
475 A void, or by the self-destroying act
Admits defeat."

While speaking she had raised
Her head; her eye had brightened, and her cheek
Assumed a slightly crimson tinge; and as
Continuing she spoke, a vigor sprang
480 Into her being all unknown before
And fierce to view.

"The prince of cowards is
The suicide, and I will not be one:
I'll face the world and all its woe; for by
The aid of him who lit the sun I will
485 Subdue the hostile foe and stamp upon
Its neck. The noble house of Normandy
Has never known a slave, nor will I be
The first."

To Arnaud then she said, "Adieu
Good Father Charles; you met me as a child,
490 But now you see a woman, stern and strong.
As exercise invigorates the frame,
Adversity endues the mind with strength,
And animates the intellect to cope
With greater ills. Our troubles are not sent
495 Without design; the spirit, fortified

And chastened by the stern ordeal, from thence
Emerges girt with strength. I now must go
And see his grace."

Confused, her foe replied,
" My blessings shall attend your efforts child ;
500 Be prudent firm and brave."

" Rely upon
Me Father Charles," the heiress said, " Adieu ! "
" Adieu my daughter ! " he replied, and as
He watched the slight receding figure pass
Beyond his sight he muttered to himself
505 With wondering visage, " Certainly I think
No artizan has had a better tool
To serve his needs than I possess. What strength
Of intellect, intensity and force
Of character, and energy of will !
510 I've faced a bear in depth of forest, felt
The breath of mountain boar, but never was
So cowed as when I gazed upon her fierce
Deportment, standing like Minerva, wrapped
In all the dignity of conscious might.
515 I do congratulate myself I do !
Tis unexpected, I confess : a weak
Submissive maiden I had brought my mind
To picture as the one that I must needs
Arouse and boldly face her father's ire.
520 But this intrepid woman takes me by
Surprise. The more that I consider her
Resolve, her strength, and attributes that form
Her character the more impressed I am.
She needs but little help from me, and seems
525 Complete within herself. I must admit
My conscience goads me not a little for
Precipitating her into the woe
That must result in this collision of
Such potent wills. But bah ! revenge must shun
530 The thought of pity to attain its end."

FIFTH SECTION.

We find our heroine in her boudoir
And meditating on her cruel fate.

" I said I was unwell when last I met

His grace within his room, and he informed
535 Me of his action. Was it truth? It was :
My heart is sick, my brain is racked with deep
Convulsive shocks that wear the life away.
My bosom aches with feelings shattered and
Affections torn. My father seemed so kind
540 And gentle that I much disliked to bring
His wrath upon myself. What shall I do !
My friends, my nurse, my maid have all agreed
That I am fortunate indeed in such
A splendid match. But I do not : he is,
545 I firmly am convinced, a man whose bad
Inconstant habits destine me to be
Unhappy in my married life. Should I
Decline to serve my father's will it would
Incur his great displeasure, for he does
550 Not brook a question to his stern commands.
My father ! he who watched my tender years,
Has reared supported and protected me :
Must I defy his will ? I even dread
To ask him to retract the promise made,
555 For fear it would arouse his latent rage.
Ah well, I'll venture and accept the chance,
And see if he from love my favor grants."

The door swung open and his grace appeared.
As Catherine was seated with her back
560 To him, she did not witness his approach.
Nor did she hear him when he spoke, so lost
Was she in reverie and musings sad.

"My daughter? What, no answer to my voice?
I see, she's wrapped in th' oblivious cloak of thought :
565 The intellect assumes its silent wings ;
The present is a blank ; the mind shakes off
The garb of flesh, and then without restraint
It roves through all the realms of future and
Of past. The scenes of bygone days present
570 Themselves before the mind, and visions of
The future rise with prophecy divine.
Come back, sweet spirit, come from fields of pain
Or rapture, and resume thine office in
This lovely tenement."

He touched her on
575 The shoulder, and she started violently.

" My child, what causes this dejection, pray ? "
 The Duke assumed a seat and gazed at her
 In much surprise, and Catherine replied,
 " Why father do I look — "

She could not speak

580 Another word, but longed to tell him her
 Desire, but feared the consequence. " I must
 Not show my agitation when I speak ;
 It will betray my feelings : " to herself
 She murmured this. She knew she stood upon
 585 A narrow ledge ; the danger made her faint.

The Duke became impatient : " Well ? " he asks.

" Yes, father, I should say — " Compelled to stop.

She so forgot her etiquette in fright
 As standing with her back before his grace,
 590 And resting at a table for support.
 " My heart is thumping in its fright," she groaned,
 " Like iron hoofs upon a stony road."

" Why lean upon a table and display
 Your back to me ? " exclaimed the angered Duke.
 595 " I do not like such acts : you speak in such
 Disjointed sentences, and breathe so hard,
 I judge you are disturbed exceedingly.
 What trouble, child ? "

She muttered to herself,

" Oh mighty engine of emotions, cease
 600 Your fearful throbbings ! — Father, you must know — "
 Again she faltered, and her voice succumbed.
 " I cannot speak, my throat is swollen so."

Such actions strange aroused the Duke to wrath,
 So rising and approaching her he said,
 605 " But what is this I know ? perhaps it is
 That you are not contented with the choice
 That I have made for you ? "

Then Catherine
 Recovered speech and cried, " No I am not ;
 And I implore your grace to listen to
 610 My earnest words ! "

" What ! " spake the staggered Duke,
 So you would argue with me and attempt
 To change my mind ? "

" Your grace I do beseech
 Your clemency ! " she begged ; but he returned,

“No more! withdraw unto your chamber, stay
 615 Until I send for you. Why foolish girl
 You could as well restrain the march of time
 As check the current of my purpose. Go!”

That mandate was the kind to be obeyed,
 And Catherine staggered weeping to her room
 620 Without another word. His grace in rage
 Soliloquized while pacing up and down.

“Is this the child who has so many times
 Her strong affections vowed; is this the girl
 That has with due caresses owned her love
 625 As daughter to her sire? How oft has she
 Her filial duty to myself observed,
 And yet she even dares to intimate
 That I have not been wise and chosen such
 As would be fitting Her Fastidiousness.
 630 Perhaps she thinks she must not marry him
 Because she hath not loved him first. Indeed!
 My will must be obeyed before her love.”
 With these remarks he sternly left the room.

In little while the nurse appears, and says
 635 Before she closes the apartment door,
 “Good night my lady, may the moonbeams kiss
 The shadows from thine eyes, and grant thee bliss.

“Poor child! I cannot comfort her: I tried
 My very best. But hark! what time is it?
 640 The village clock is striking.” While she stood
 And listened ten reverberations rang
 With heavy detonation, grave and grand,
 Upon the silent air. “Tis ten o’clock,”
 She mused, and putting out the lights retired.

SIXTH SECTION.

645 Its midnight in the palace, and a light
 Appears within the same apartment which
 We saw excited by a violent scene.

But who is this who thus disturbs the gloom
 Of darkest hour? A peasant! so it seems:
 650 A peasant surely by the dress; a girl;
 A girl, and pretty, yes and beautiful,
 Her age about a score of years or so,
 The village clock is striking; listen! twelve.

The stranger speaks; the voice we've heard before,
 655 "My plans are consummated: I will leave
 This habitation of despotic sway.
 It is the hour of midnight: silence dwells
 Within the house and over all the land,
 It will be easy to escape if I
 660 Am careful."

Can it be? its Catherine!
 But let her speak, and tell the tale herself —
 'Tis better — while she puts her candle down,
 And seats herself a moment in a chair,
 665 Observing,
 "Yes, I am resolved to go,
 And be a high-born serf no more.
 Am I a fowl to fattened be, and sold
 Unto the highest bidder, or a colt,
 To feed upon the tend'rest grass, and trained
 670 And groomed, and sold to Anjou's son? 'Tis not
 The office of mine intellect to breed
 Such thoughts as these. But what am I to do?
 My father wishes me to marry one
 In whom I have no faith: and yet his grace
 675 My father is; and shall I disobey
 His mandates so? To him I owe my birth,
 My rank, my wealth: but must a mendicant
 Who has received some favors from thy hand
 Be sold a slave to pay thy debt? I will
 680 No longer pose for sale before the world.
 Why! does he think my feelings are so dull
 And senseless as to quietly submit
 To being auctioned to a wealthy duke?
 Do I exist without a heart of love,
 685 And is emotion dead within my breast?
 Must all my happiness depend upon
 The land and gold that flows within his grasp?
 Before I will submit to such a shame
 I'll earn subsistence by ennobling toil:
 690 I'll be a peasant, and will thrust my arms
 Into the tide of labor, that the world
 May know that I forego the pride of rank
 And wealth for honest freedom though its earned
 By labor: for I have a foot that can
 695 Support me, and an arm that can defend

- Me, and with these I scorn his dictum and
His proud ambition, though he is my sire.
I leave this house and never will return ;
Nor do I take from him a single coin,
700 And all the clothing that I wear I made
Myself. I would not rob his store of one
Iota of its hoard of wealth. I will
Assert my rights and take the consequence :
If other maidens will so abject be,
705 That I will not is what we'll quickly see.”
- With these remarks she glided through a door
And out a hall that little use had known.
But notwithstanding all the fires that flamed
Within her soul — the bitter thoughts, the pangs
710 Of deep regret, and apprehensions of
Her future — yet her countenance was calm.
A stalwart heart betrays no sign of grief
Or love, though tortured by their fiery tongues.
A mask of flint conceals the suffering soul.
- 715 Upon the terrace lawn the Duke is seen ;
And thus he moralizes to himself :
“ A storm is brewing : tis a surly night.
The wretch deserves the pity of a god
Whose business or necessity compels
720 Confronting such a tempest as the one
That is about to scathe the valley now.”
And then a pause ; another promenade.
- “ I do not feel like sleep to-night ; the thought
Of Catherine's behavior keeps me from
725 My rest. If she does not obey my will
With absolute compliance, I will send
Her to a nunnery, until she learns
The blessing of obedience, and sees
The folly of opposing my commands.”
- 730 And while he muttered to himself a form
Was stealing from the palace, and approached
The spot where Normandy was standing. Then
It noticed him, and darted in the shade
Of some convenient bush. The Duke returned,
735 And passed within the house. Before the door
Had closed she hurled a parting speech at him
Beneath her breath, that much relieved her mind.
“ The tempest is more merciful than thou !

The lightning, that appals the face of man,
740 Is mild compared with thee, but he who reigns
Omnipotent above the thunder-cloud
Will recognize the virtue of my choice."

CANTO III.

THE REVENGE.

"I'm weary of existence."

FIRST SECTION.

- A fortnight has elapsed since Catherine
Departed from the ducal palace. How
The interval was spent we let the tale
That follows tell. The time is more remote
5 By full a week since Arnaud left the court
Of Anjou. Now we meet again, but how
The world has changed! Our rendezvous
An inn; a simple wayside inn, but most
Respectable. The sitting-room becomes
10 Our place of meeting, where, without delay
Or formal introduction we present
Our characters, omitting also all
Description of surrounding objects. Cast
The eye around and scan the faces of
15 The persons present. Yes, you are surprised—
To recognize our hero, as he sits
Before the fire in lounging attitude.
The noble gentleman is seated with
His back toward the door, and does not hear
20 The entrance of a servant in the dress
Of peasant girl. Then astonishment
Increases, for the maid is none but she
Who chose to drudge than wound her conscience in
The chapter previous. A pause, and then
25 She breaks his reverie, but softly to
Herself she first soliloquises thus:
How very still he is: he does not hear
My footsteps on the floor. Good morning, sir;

Your breakfast waits your taste."

To which the heir

30 Indifferently replied :

" I do not wish
To eat : I much prefer to fast until
The midday hour."

" 'Tis as you wish, monsieur,"
The girl replied, and left the room.

The heir

Was startled from his meditation, and
35 Began to talk — addressing first himself,
And then the chairs, the fire, and various things
And objects for an audience, as thus :

" I pine for home ; but that is fruitless, though.
I'm tired of this life : I thought it would
40 Be quite a pleasant change ; — well so it is,
In some respects, but not in others ; no !
As far as my surroundings are concerned
There's ample cause to be contented, for
I have the best that grows upon the vine,
45 That swims the limpid stream, that eats the grass.
Madame has tried to make me comfortable,
And in her efforts drains her flimsy store.
I hunt and fish with sportive youths, and flirt
With village beauties ; — but I still repine.
50 The cause ? Can man be happy with a ghost
That consorts with him ? Scarcely : company
Like that is not agreeable. I wish
I had a sympathetic friend — a friend
To whom I could relate my troubles, pour
55 In his condoling ear my miseries.
I left my father's house two weeks ago,
And strayed about from place to place, but had
Not wandered long before a shadow crossed
My path. T was here, t was there, t was everywhere.
60 I strolled upon the river bank ; a rock
Stood sentinel upon the slope ; the sun
Shone brightly, and my heart was feather light.
But soon a change was wrought : from out behind
The hoary rock appeared an open hand,
65 That slowly closed. I stared in dumb surprise,
And went to see what it could mean, but naught
Was visible. I turned to leave, and on

- The rock I saw a skull, reposing there
In somber solitude. I took it up :
70 Upon its forehead was the word "Revenge,"
Inscribed in ink. Within that grinning skull
There reigned the majesty of death ; and from
The bony cavities proceeded rays
Of living darkness. Mute and scornful were
75 Its naked jaws, and parched its lifeless throat.
"I then reflected: first, the closing hand,
The passive skull, upon whose forehead was
The fateful word enthroned. I trembled with
A sudden fear, and filled with terror fled.
80 "I left the neighborhood and visited
Another village. Walking through a grove
I came upon a barren sandy spot,
And on that earthy tablet was a skull
In characters so sharp and real that I
85 Recoiled in dread. Upon its forehead was
The same expression of malignant hate,
"Revenge." I left in haste: a frightful shriek
Was wafted through the woods—not as the cry
Of human being in distress; it was
90 A wail of anguish from a fallen soul.
How weak! to be afraid of marks in sand.
But that was not the last of what I've seen:
I changed again; located in this place.
I had a favorite spot I visited
95 Each day: the third I thence inclined my steps.
I passed a massive rock: my sight received
A shock as deep and fateful as the first.
Upon its grizzled front was marked in black,
A skeleton, unlovely, symbol of
100 Our mortal consequence. What iron will
Could face a scene like that without a chill
Of horrified repugnance through the frame?
I hurried from the scene on frightened feet;
Again the awful shriek my senses shocked
105 As through the avenue of trees I charged.
"But I shall stay in spite of all these woes.
It may be cowardly to mind such things;
I cannot help it if it is; the mind
Is not prepared for such assaults, and is
110 With ease and promptness overcome, If I

- Anticipated such a circumstance
 I could equip my intellect for such
 A hideous ordeal. But that is not
 The way this horrid genius manages :
- 115 He plots and acts when I am off my guard.
 "Tis horrible soliloquizing thus ;
 To mumble fret and groan in solitude
 Without a soul to speak to : its the worst
 And hardest feature of my banishment.
- 120 But still I know I should not murmur so —
 Those most complain who know the least of woe."
 When he had finished there appeared a man,
 An aged man, who wore a beard as white
 As winter's mantle, and whose frame was bent
- 125 A little — not so very much, but still
 It signified advancing age. He leaned
 Upon a cane, but as his step was firm
 It signified a weakness of the back.
 His eyes were black, and glittered like the gloss
- 130 That lends adornment to the mourning jet.
 "How is Monsieur this afternoon?" observed
 The patriarch in wheezy voice.
 "As well
 As if I were not sick," returned the heir.
 "You tell me true!" again remarked the bore,
- 135 "What might your name be sir?"
 "The same as when
 The bishop christened me," was his reply.
 "Most singular — most odd : where is your place
 Of residence?"
 "At home," was all that he
 Received in answer to the question put.
- 140 There was a silence for a moment, then
 The ancient and vexatious man resumed :
 "Where are you bound Monsieur; where might
 it be?"
 "My destination," was the brief response.
 "Oh yes; exactly," said the baffled man,
- 145 In search of information, "May I ask
 If you have travelled much?" to which the son
 Of Anjou answered, cautious and reserved,
 "I always travel when away from home,"
 "Indeed, you fill me with astonishment,"

150 "Why that is wondrous strange; I thought you
full
Of curiosity."

"How very shrewd,"
The nuisance still persisted. "When do you
Depart?"

"In time to go." The answer was
As quick as was the question put.

"You have
155 Selected well your time of leave," replied
The hoary old interrogation point.

The pair were silent for a while, and then
The aged man observed, persisting still,
"Your occupation sir, what might it be?"

160 "To be the butt of the inquisitive,"
Rejoined the heir; then murmured to himself,
"This curious old bore has tried to worm
From me my pedigree and personal
Affairs since we have been together in

165 The house this morning; but I fear he has
An awkward time of it. My aged sir,
A word with you; Interrogation of
A wary man is very fruitless work."

With this remark our hero left the room.

SECOND SECTION

170 But who is this who straightens up his back
And elevates his head? that takes a beard
From off his face and stands before us as
A man of middle age? We cannot fail
To recognize the twitching cheek, the eye
175 That cannot rest, the sly deceitful lip.
There is no doubt of it: before us stands
The baron. Listen while he speaks: he gives
A chuckle, and observes,

"He does amuse
180 Me much; I scarcely can believe it's he
So odd were his replies. He makes me laugh!
This beard of mine is very loose, and scarce
Fulfills the object of the maker; and
I fear he will detect me in this dress.

185 Well, here I am, and face to face with him

- Who is the object of my deadly hate.
 And how I frighten him! a harmless skull
 Is terror to his eyes; a few dry bones
 Bree! sounds of consternation in his ears.
 190 Yet tis the same in all the roads of life:
 For we i nagine clouds are rocks, that gates
 Are walls, and harmless fantasies portend
 Impending woe. Me moralizing! well,
 I wonder how my customary thoughts
 195 Regard their strange companions? There'll be war
 Of hostile factions in my brain if I
 Do not desist. Here goes my wig for there
 Is some one coming."

- He had heard a step
 Beyond the door, and re-adjusted his
 200 Disguise, when Catherine appeared. A glance
 Was all-sufficient to reveal the state
 Of matters to the guilty serundrel, who
 With effort kept his equilibrium.
 "Astounding revelation, it is she!"
 205 The monster dropped into a seat, and turned
 His back. So agitated was he that
 He felt she must have noticed his alarm.
 "Your breakfast, sir, iavites you to partake,"
 Said Catherine, without observing how
 210 He acted. Arnaud, though, was anxious to
 Avoid her gaze, and hurriedly replied,
 "Such invitations never are refused
 By me," and with alacrity he sought
 The breakfast room. A weary sigh escaped
 215 Our heroine, who meditated thus,
 While dusting furniture and cleaning rooms:
 "My work is never done: its dust and sweep,
 Its cook and wash, since I two weeks ago
 Engaged for servant's work. Tis honest toil,
 220 And should command respect. But that does not
 Relieve my aches and pains. My rearing was
 Not such as to enure me to this toil:
 For strength of limb, and calloused hand is what
 Is needed for this heavy work. The strain
 225 Upon the faculties is trying to
 A slight physique like mine, that hitherto
 Has dwelt at ease, unused to exercise

- Except the dainty practices at court,
 As horsemanship and archery; **that** tone
 230 The system, whet the appetite, but do
 Not steel the body. Then the mistress of
 This hostelry is such a crabbed dame;
 She scolds if either does not satisfy
 Her august majesty — if it be good
 235 Or ill. I do not disregard a just
 And honest censure, but endeavor to
 Improve my ways by lessons of the kind;
 But human feeling must rebel against
 Unwarranted reproach, when striving to
 240 Perform its duty as the best it can.
 Respect decreases with prolonged rebuke.
 “Although it is but noon my limbs are weak
 And plead for rest; my waist must break in twain.
 What future can I hope as matters stand?
 245 With surly mistress, who demands of me
 Results impossible: no home to fly
 Thereto when health declines, but work and bear
 My ills till fortitude becomes almost
 A sin. What shall become of me when health
 250 Is wrecked, and intellect succumbs? Ah well,
 I’ll trust in him who promises to aid
 The widow and protect the fatherless —
 For father I have none, though once I had.
 “Do I regret my di-obedience?
 255 Oh no! the thought of home and luxury
 Does not allure from the path that I
 Have chosen, though the route to duty be
 With broken stones and thistles garnished: for
 I still adhere to my convictions and
 260 Accept the dire result. Oh here she comes!”
 The dame appeared when she had finished, dressed
 In prim array. About the age of five
 And fifty, rather small and rather sharp.
 Her eyes could easily light a fire, and
 265 Her temper could have kept her pickles well.
 Her teeth had threatened frequently to break
 The contract they had made, and marry with
 The elements. Her hairs were leaving fast
 Their native heath, and hopeless prodigals
 270 Were turning. On her brow in aspect fierce

Sat resolution and a cap ; and stern
Inflexible were both her will and waist.

“ Have you not finished dusting ? you have been
A lengthy time in doing it.” So spake
275 Her mistress, whose accomplishments we saw.

“ Madame,” replied the weary Catherine,
“ I have not finished yet : have patience with
Me for a moment more.”

“ You always have
Excuse, the natural language of your tongue,”
280 Returned the dame, while sweeping from the room ;
“ But come and get your breakfast Catherine ! ”
“ Such people cause the wheels of time to creak,”
Remarked the girl, as sigh succeeded sigh,
And wearily she left the sitting room.

THIRD SECTION.

285 Tis moonlight in the forest, and the owls
Will stare at us from leafy ambuscade,
As through the silver light we wend our way,
Then wheel away with many a dismal hoot.

A step is heard ; we listen : soon a man
290 Approaches through the bushes, and we start
In slight surprise to recognize the face
Of Bertrand. What has he to bring him to
This lonely spot ; what business, pleasure, pray ?
But let him tell his story : better far than I
295 Could tell it for him. On a stone he sinks,
Dejected, woe-begone and weak. Upon
His left a massive rock its sovereign sway
Assumes in silence stern, and none dispute
Its rule. Its center has been rent by some
300 Convulsion, and is parted wide enough
For one to pass between. The moonlight streams
In rays of gentle beauty through the cleft,
But Bertrand, sitting in the shade, observes
It not as we have done, for thus he speaks :

305 “ Oh ghastly moonlight ! through the evening
mists

Thy penetrating beams descend, and play
With thoughtless fingers on the heart-strings of
This weary life, with discord the response.

- The spirit groans in deep distress, while through
 310 My breast the agonizing wail of sorrow sweeps.
 The manifold deceptions of the night
 Excite a fearful dread within my mind,
 That baffles argument and saps the strength.
 The moonbeams weave themselves with pliant ease
 315 In ghastly fabrications, that within
 My fevered mind instil a horror deep
 And black as cloudy midnight. Trees and rocks
 Are ghouls and phantoms in my sight, and God's
 Eternal luminaries sparkle with
 320 A cold and sullen gleam. There was a time,
 Not distant, when the song of insects on
 The moon-lit atmosphere was charming to
 My ravished ears, and most delightful thrills
 Of reverential awe possessed my mind.
 325 Tis passed away; the harmonies that bird
 And insect breathe to their creator fall
 On inattentive ears, or what is worse,
 Provoke a shade of melancholy gloom.
 Why have I sought this spot, why tarry thus?
 330 A reason fathomless has brought me here,
 And chained me to the spot."

Then at the feet
 Of Bertrand falls a shadow, cast by some
 Opaque material posted in the cleft.

- "What shadow's this?" he cries, and turns to see
 335 A figure, standing in the gap, has caused
 The silhouette, enveloped in a cloak.
 As Bertrand's eyes behold the stranger's form
 There issues from the ghostly depths of cloak
 The single chilling word, "Revenge!"

- "What face
 340 To face!" exclaimed our hero, as he drew
 His sword and sprang toward the gap. 'Twas vain;
 The apparition had dissolved—to all
 Appearances.

- "Not here!" he cried, and ran
 Around in front. "Nor here! Within my grasp,
 345 Yet gone."

He sheathed his sword, and sank upon
 The stone, soliloquizing thus:

"It was

A mortal's voice I heard ; but mortals can't
 Appear and disappear without a trace,
 Their composition is too tangible

350 " What *can* this dark illusion mean ? Why do
 I fear ? Can mortals cope with spirits ? can
 This sword the limbs of phantoms cleave ?
 What courage can assail the ghostly shape
 That chills the ardent fluid of the veins.

355 Where can I go to shun this misery ?
 My footsteps haunted by this dreadful ghost !
 It girds me 'round about, it wrings my soul ;
 It robs me of my manhood, plucks from off
 My brow the freshness and the glory of
 360 My youth. My startled faculties have lost
 Their courage, and alarmed hold session in
 Their abject fear within my raging brain.

" It seems as though my mind, unbalanced, reels
 And plunges in a vortex, horrible
 365 As Hell's wide sulphurous throat. Why do I thus
 Resign myself to meditations, black
 With horror as a den of vampires. These
 My wayward thoughts go howling through
 A pathless void, and shriek among the crevices
 370 Of my distracted soul. The horrors of
 Eternal night engulf my spirit and
 Confound my sense. Do I behold the moon
 Turn black, or is my vision tarnished ? Do
 I see the crown of Heaven split as with
 375 A mighty throe of nature, or my skull
 Refuse to hold my crazy brain, and part
 From front to rear. I'm powerless to move ;
 My muscles fail to do their duty when
 I bid them act, and leave me to my fate."

380 While thus his intellect was boiling like
 An angry crater, through the shades there came
 A terrifying shriek, that froze his blood.

" Ye spectred ghosts and goblins of the night,
 Your spell remove and let me go from hence !
 385 Stark madness grins with shapeless countenance,
 And chatters in my ears till reason quakes,
 And threatens to succumb. Her maddening laugh
 Transforms my blood to ice. Earth speaks to Hell,
 And Hell repeats the dreadful tale of woe.

- 390 Along the corridors of fate there rings
 The clarion peal of doom, that sounds the note
 Of warning to this fainting spirit. Oh
 I'm going mad, I'm going raving mad!"
- The persecuted man his temples clasped,
 395 And sank unto the earth; and as he lay,
 A swooning wreck, an open hand appeared
 Behind the stolid rock, its shadow fell
 Upon the prostrate form, its fingers closed
 In slow and savage, fierce prophetic clasp.

FOURTH SECTION.

- 400 Our thoughts are next directed to the inn,
 And in the family room, to find Madame
 Is there before us. Now the crispy dame
 Is lost in thought, and meditates awhile.
- "I have endeavored to elicit from
 405 This singular young woman whom I have
 In my employ, her history, and some
 Particulars of her preceeding life.
 I had discovered that the work was more
 Than I could do alone. Assistance I
 410 Must have: but this is harvest time, and maids
 Are scarce. So who should come but Catherine.
 She would not tell her history, but begged
 For work: so as I was in need of help,
 I then and there engaged her services;—
- 415 But for a little while: for she is weak,
 Though willing: I must make the last excuse
 The first. She will acquire by constant toil
 The strength to bear her burdens, and her limbs,
 Become of more end ring fabric, will
 420 Be capable of greater deeds than now.
- "And yet the fact that puzzles me is just
 Those tiny feet and hands of hers, that could
 Not crush a fly. It is a mystery!
 She must have been brought up in affluence.
 425 Perhaps she is an exile from her home,
 Disgraced and shamed, and by her family cast
 Away. If so she must begone:—and soon;
 I'll have no doubtful characters within
 My house. I told her that she must reveal

- 430 The circumstances of her life, or go.”
 When she had ceased, Lord Bertrand burst within
 The room. His hair was in disorder, and
 His clothing indicated by its looks
 That toilet was a thing of little thought
 435 The present morning. With a gasp he speaks :
 “ The air is filled with spectres, and the ground
 Gives birth to ghostly shapes ! ”
 With this he passed
 The door, and in the garden. Quite alarmed,
 The dame exclaimed,
 “ Poor gentleman ! he is
 440 Disturbed with foolish thoughts. I wonder what
 Can be the trouble though ? ”
 With that she left
 The room. A little while and Catherine
 Appeared, to dust as usual. While engaged,
 Our much distracted hero entered, and without
 445 Observing Catherine he dropped upon
 A chair, and thus remarked but half aloud :
 “ Last evening I beheld a ghost — or was
 Insane. I had a paroxysm, fell
 Upon the ground ; awoke, and with confused
 450 Intelligence I wandered to my room.
 Then as lay in bed, my eyes were closed
 In sleep ; I heard a rattle as of bones
 And chains. I started up and gazed around :
 Within the window of my room there stared
 455 A skull, which glowed as though it were dipped
 In Hell’s sulphuric liquid, and a groan
 Proceeded from its arid throat, that caused
 My hair to rear and skin to creep in fright.”
 “ How wild he is,” our Catherine remarked.
 460 While she proceeded with her dusting, all
 Oblivious to Bertrand, who had set
 With back to her : “ His actions prove his mind
 Is agitated by unusual cause.
 His violent deportment makes me think
 465 A shock severe has been administered to
 His equanimity. He is oppressed
 With thoughts that need no company.”
 With this
 She passed in silence from the room, and as

- The door was closed, Madame appeared and said,
470 "I cannot understand where Catherine
Has gone, for I have searched the house for her."
With this she turned to go; and Bertrand rose
And in a desperate voice remarked aloud,
"I doubt my manhood when I tremble thus,
475 And think my mind is going to decay."
Such language startled the Madame who to
Her frantic guest observed,
"Monsieur, you seem
To be disturbed to-day. Your aspect is
So agitated that I fancy you
480 Have had some trouble with opposing ills."
"My good Madame," said Bertrand, "has this
place
Been haunted, is it haunted now, or are
The elements in dark conspiracy
With my imagination to destroy
485 My reason?"
You alarm me sir!" exclaimed
The frightened dame at this, "Be calm!"
"Be calm!"
He cried. "Why not request me not to breathe?
I could refrain from inspiration full
As eas'ly as to be composed just now.
490 Who can confront a goblin placidly,
Or with serene demeanor feel the touch
Of spectred hands in all their clammy chill.
I must be mad, or something worse. My mind's
Diseased, and genders baleful thoughts that shock
495 The rational sense."
With these remarks he dropped
Upon a chair, and then relapsed in thought.
"I think I'll go; I do not care to court
The company of lunatics."
With that
She glided from the room, and Bertrand thus
500 Reflected deep:
"Until last evening fear
Had been a myth to me. 'Tis strange what fear
Will do! What is this strange phenomenon?
Alarm and trepidation is not *fear*.
I've faced a mountain bear on dangerous ledge,

- 505 And quaked, though not with fear, and challenged
his
Attack with steady gaze: my strength and skill
Had won my confidence. Though frightened at
His fierce deportment, yet no piercing pang
Of mortal anguish seized my soul. I've fought
510 With torrents deep and wide, with sturdy limbs
Assailed the foaming volume, been alarmed
At strength of current and the width of stream,
Lest I should drown — but fear was still unknown.
Convulsion of the soul is fear, a blow
515 Unto the mind, that staggers reason, checks
Discretion, weakens thought, and makes a man
Or woman worse than child. It is the dread
Anticipation of intangible
And imperceptible disaster, that
520 Avoids engagement and descends unseen.
“A case of mere dismay will cause a man
To tremble, woman scream: but if the hair
Is stiff, the eye is set, and motionless
The frame — 'tis then the mind is frozen, and
525 The soul is palsied by the spasm's stroke.
This fear I had in aggravated form:
My craven soul was girdled with a chill,
Congealing blood and thought. I summoned all
My fortitude to check my cowardice
530 Without avail, so awful was the shock.”
“As he was meditating in this strain, the door
Was opened, Arnaud entered, bowed with age,
As heretofore he had disguised himself.
A smile of secret satisfaction burned
535 Upon his wicked visage as he thought,
“Poor lunatic! I pity him; but 'tis
The pity of a butcher that I feel.”
To Bertrand then he spoke in voice disguised,
“And how are you this morn'ing, sweet Monsieur?”
540 “I thought I was a child,” Lord Bertrand mused,
But now he proves it by accosting me
As sweet.” Then turning to the man, remarked,
“My venerated sir, you would, perchance,
Be more correct in your address if you
545 Would term me anything but sweet, for I
On this occasion feel intensely sour.”

With this he rose, and slowly left the room.

“Revenge thine agency is powerful!”

Remarked the schemer to himself in glee.

550 As he is passing out our Catherine
Returns. She stands in hopeless attitude,
And droops upon her stem, a fading flower.

“I’ve swept the hall and washed the dishes, put
The sleeping rooms in order, dusted all

555 The rooms:—why *did* I come in here? it’s slipped
My mind. I cannot think what brought me here.”

The door was opened and Madame appeared.
Now what have you come hither for,” inquired
The wrathful hostess of the inn.

“I do
560 Not know,” replied the girl, her dizzy brain
Unable to perform its duties right;
“I really am confused.”

“Of course,” the dame
Returned with sneering tone, “The gentleman!”
Then as a wounded look appeared upon

565 The face of Catherine, she said in voice
That had a steely ring, “But listen girl,
I took you out of charity, and gave
You some employment, so that you could earn
A living; but I now expect that you

570 Shall tell me of your history, and how
It is your feet and hands are not like those
Of other servant maids. I do not like
This mystery; it’s dangerous to my house,
And to my safety thus to harbor one

575 Who has not proved her honesty. You may
Perhaps be fugitive from law, or in
A cloud of disrepute be banished from
Your home. Come, speak! or you must leave my
house.”

Our heroine replied with dropping tears,
580 “Good mistress, spare me I implore! I can’t
Relate the circumstances that have brought
Me here; but I can bare my conscience to
The blaze of noon, and challenge all reproach.”

To which Madame replied, “You must divulge
585 Your secret or begone.”

But Catherine

Implored again: "Oh trust me, trust my youth,
 Madame, and do not cast me out to face
 A living death; for all have cast me off
 As you would when I sought by upright ways
 590 To earn a livelihood and begged for work."
 "I compliment their judgement and their sense,"
 Returned the austere dame, "Now will you state
 What I have asked you to?"
 The girl replied
 In deep despair, "I cannot, cannot, tell!"
 595 "Then you must go," returned Madame, and
 with
 A stony look upon her visage left
 The room. The blow was great, and keenly felt:
 The crushed and fainting out-cast sank upon
 A seat, and hid her face in deep distress.

FIFTH SECTION.

600 The grand and solemn mysteries of life
 And death, of providence and fate are now
 To pass before us, flash upon our gaze
 Their startling scenes, and vanish, but to leave
 Us lost in wonder, why they came and why
 605 They go. Yet possibly we can conceive
 A motive of sublime importance wrought
 By Him who rules the destinies of men;
 Intended, not with fierce satanic glee
 To wreck the joys of life, but with an aim
 610 Divine and just, infallible, and high
 Above the cramped conception of the mind.
 But let us not too deeply probe, for as
 The rash explorer of a cavern, vast
 And gloomy, loses in his zeal the way,
 615 So may we overzealously exceed
 The bounds of human understanding and
 Of reverence, and be a mark of scorn
 And ridicule in Heaven.
 Is it not
 A circumstance of grave surprise to see
 620 A man of Bertrand's strength of mind succumb
 To sights and noises such as he had met?
 And yet the texture of the human mind

Is such that inconsistencies should not excite
Surprise: for weak is he who fears a blow,
625 Possessing strength to meet the shock.
Less weak who fears when mortal strength is vain.
But least deserving of our scorn the one
Who shrinks from horrors hid from sight, and shocks
Of shapeless doom; his fierce antagonist
630 Unknown, invisible, relentless, cruel.
Encompassed by a multitude of grim
Resistless foes, whose schemes he cannot grasp;
But worst of all to be possessed with dread
Of something which the mind can feel but not
635 Conceive — such victim must our sympathy
Receive, but not contempt. Then sympathize
With Bertrand, strong, but mortal like ourselves,
For in an age of superstition he
Was born; when witches were tormented, burned,
640 And evil spirits were believed and feared.
Remember groundless fears that all have had,
And then with reason pity his despair.

Then Catherine deserves compassion too:
Her force of will, her talents no avail.
645 She must by harsh experience be taught
That there are times when energy is void
And intellect is fruitless; as the wrecked
And thirsty mariner is helpless, or
The mighty locomotive's zeal, that strives
650 In vain upon the slippery track.

Now let

Us turn our minds to scenes that challenge our
Attention. It is on a river bluff
Adjoining the locality where last
We saw the characters that sway the plot
655 Our narrative develops. First we see
That demon, Arnaud, in disguise. He wears
The beard and clothing of an aged man
As when we saw him last, and as he strolls
Along the bluff we listen to his voice
660 As thus he mutters softly to himself:
“How clever I must be to shock him so.
Tis singular how some believe in ghosts
And phantoms — yes, its very odd indeed!
Now Bertrand thinks a ghost is haunting him,

- 665 And seeking his destruction : — well, he's right ;
 He never had opinion more correct ;
 For I will hound him till my threat's fulfilled !
 I follow him and groan with lusty lungs,
 (Oh I can groan, I'm skillful in the art)
 670 And in my pockets carry bones and chains,
 That when in occupation would alarm
 The lifeless rocks with sounds of death and woe.
 I'll drive him mad, or torture him until
 He kills himself. Revenge ! thou sweetest of
 675 Confectioneries from the vat of Hell,
 I taste thee with a relish ! But I'll make
 The object of my 'mortal spite' to save
 Me trouble of the wiping of my sword."
 But suddenly he starts and springs behind
 680 A friendly tree, exclaiming under breath,
 " He did not see me or he would have stopped."
 And Bertrand did not see : with downcast air
 He walked along the bluff, observing as
 He sadly cast himself upon the ground,
 685 Indifference in his voice, and careless phrase,
 " I'm weary of existence ; life is but
 A cauldron of distress, where good and bad
 Are boiled alike. I'm in the humor for
 Some desp'rate deed, so reckless do I feel,
 690 With all this horror persecuting me.
 The lash is wielded with a vigor so
 Intense I cannot bear it."

- Arnaud, just
- At this, proclaimed his presence by a groan,
 And vigorous exercise of bones and chains.
 695 A deathly horror gripped the turbid soul
 Of Bertrand. Springing to his feet he cried
 In terror and despair,
 " Oh there it is
 Again in all its dismal wail of woe.
 Tis making life so unsupportable
 700 I will endure no more ! "

Then rushing to

The brink, without another word he cast
 Himself from off the edge. As down he plunged
 The joyful Arnaud tore his beard and wig
 From face and head, and shouted as

705 He waved them in the air.

"Revenge!"

His breath

Had scarcely cooled when he beheld a form
Approach the brink with rapid strides, a rod
Or so above the spot where Bertrand had
Precipitated soul and body. Trees

710 And heavy bushes had prevented sight

On either side, and both were too absorbed
To notice one another. Arnaud sprang
Toward her, and exclaimed,

“ Desist ! ”

To late :

715 For Catherine had dissappeared, had thrown
Herself from off the river bluff. Then stood
The guilty wretch a moment mute: his soul
Was paralyzed with sudden fear; his bones
Were frozen to the marrow by a blast

720 As though from polar seas. He staggered back,
He stumbled, and he fell—a hopeless wreck;
And as supported by his arm he turned
His face to Heaven and clutched his hair,
His conscience stricken face was terrible

725 To witness, and there issued from his throat
A deathly moan —

" Oh horrors, she is gone ! "



CANTO IV

THE DECLARATION.

"And I am Catherine of Normandy."

FIRST SECTION.

Now let us turn from scenes of woe to more
Agreeable pursuits, and change the air
Of horror for an atmosphere of peace.

- But do not be surprised if faced by strange
5 Events ; but greet them as the incidents
Of daily life should be — without
Astonishment, however marvellous
May be the circumstance.

- The scene that next
Engages our attention is the room
10 That we have seen before within the inn,
And there we see our Catherine, at rest
Within an easy chair. Her face is worn
With deep anxiety, and pale as death ;
But still there elings a personality,
15 A sweetness of expression in the sad
Dejected eyes, a beauty in the face
That scorns description ; and a dignity
So charming, so attractive, that we feel
Without a knowledge of herself that we
20 Are standing in the presence of a queen
Of proud hereditary line. Her hands
Are white and thin, but still we feel
That high authority is resident
Among those waxen fingers, and a wave
25 From them would bring a monarch to her feet.
Her knitting-work affords amusement in
Her solitude ; a mantle thrown across

- Her knees declares the invalid, her hair
 Unbound, is scattered in bewitching state
 Of careless harmony, that captivates
 30 The eye, while through the open window streams
 The sunlight and the aromatic air.
 While we are speculating on her train
 Of thought, the door is opened and Madame
 Appears. Our heroine arouses from
 35 Her reverie to smile her welcome, as
 Madame observes with int'rest in her voice:
 "How pleased I am to see you better child;
 And do you feel as well as you appear?"
 "I do Madame; and thank your deep concern
 40 And kind attention," was the invalid's
 Reply with feeling.
- "Oh attribute not
 To me the praise of your recovery,"
 Protested the Madame with energy,
 "Monsieur Protentius is the one to thank:
 45 'Twas he who saved your life, and should receive
 The credit: he should have your grateful thanks."
 "And so he shall," replied our heroine,
 But where is he to thank?"
- "You soon shall meet
 Him," was the answer, "He is coming in
 50 To see you shortly."
- "I am very glad,"
 The invalid responded, with a sigh
 That emanated from her tired breast,
 "He shall receive my thanks: but dear Madame,
 I beg of you repeat the narrative
 55 Of my recovery, two days ago;
 For I can scarce remember what you told
 Me yesterday, so weary was my mind."
 The hostess of the hostelry replied
 To this entreaty with the narrative.
- 60 "The first we knew a cry of help was raised;
 Monsieur Protentius struggled in the stream
 To save your life—how noble he must be!
 A boat was soon dispatched, and you were found
 Unconscious while Monsieur Protentius held
 65 Your head above the water."

"And he risked

His life for me! " broke in our heroine
 With warmth, at hearing that: "How can I thank
 Him for his self-forgetfulness — to save
 My life!"

70 "My child?" inquired the troubled dame,
 "Have you forgiven me the wrong I did
 To you in casting you away?"

Ah poor

Madame! your life has been a struggle with
 The harshest forms of poverty that scathe
 The cheeks of mortals. We must pity you:
 75 A widow, childless; nothing to arouse
 The tender sympathies, or stir the heart
 To sweet emotions. Life a synonym
 For toil, and all your efforts spent to check
 The cold, relentless avalanche of want,
 80 Then can we wonder, should we censure, if
 The features pinch and vision sharpen, if
 The voice acquires a ring of avarice?
 Your constant intercourse with strangers kills
 The deep affections in the soul, forbids
 85 The opportunities for making friends,
 Prevents the heart from growing warm. To you
 Existence is a canon bleak and dark,
 Through which the northern tempests sweep, and
 freeze

Affection, sympathy, and noble thoughts.
 90 To you the grave is like the earthquake's jaws,
 That open, swallow, close — and life is done;
 A hideous ordeal, the end of all.

But now we see the conscience, hard, congealed,
 Before the warm affection melted to tears.

95 And Catherine observes all this: she sees
 The nature touched; she feels the reason of
 The former cause, forgives the harshness, lays
 Her hand upon the fading head that bends
 In sorrow, and in soothing tones declares:
 100 "My dear Madame, it is a trifle; do
 Not speak about it further please."

"But I

Was harsh, and so unreasonable! It was
 A shame for me to censure so, and drive
 You out. I almost fainted with remorse

- 105 As soon as I was told that you had tried
To drown yourself. It was no wonder, for
I must have made your life unbearable
With scold and finding fault:—and then to cast
You off! “
- The conscience stricken dame was now
- 110 In tears. “Now let us be more cheerful, dear
Madame,” our Catherine remarked, “You say
He ordered you to take the greatest care
Of me?”
- “The very words,” Madame replied.
“How very kind! Oh how I wish to thank
- 115 Him for his great solicitude and care.”
“You soon will have the opportunity,”
Assured Madame; but Catherine was lost
In thought, and scarcely heard her words, but soon
She said, in tone of voice that rung with strength,
“But I will not receive his favors thus,
- 120 He shall be reimbursed for any loss.”
It was her own proud spirit speaking through
Her voice: the mighty soul that had been crushed
Beneath the giant's heel was gathering strength
To grapple fate, its most malignant foe.

SECOND SECTION.

- 125 Again the door is opened, and the form
Of Bertrand enters. Then Madame arises, drops
A court'sy, looks at Catherine and says:
“Ah! you have come, Monsieur Protentius: please
Be seated by the patient, and excuse
- 130 Me for awhile: my duties call for me.”
Then to herself she added as she left
The room, but not without a glance behind,
“I'll surely neutralize their feelings if
I stay: a lovely pair they make.” Of course
- 135 The startling fact of being left alone,
The lack of ceremony was a source
Of awkward hesitancy on the part
Of both; but as they understood themselves,
Their social education placed them at
- 140 Their ease before a dozen words had been

Exchanged.

" I wish to be acquainted with
You Catherine. I'm pleased to see you so
Much better than I saw you yesterday."

The heir of Anjou spoke in kindly voice,
145 And Catherine replied with graceful speech :

" This honor I am sure I don't deserve."

" The state of our relations differs much
From heretofore," observed the noble youth,
In pleasant voice, " As then I only knew
150 You in capacity of servant maid.

The barrier of etiquette removed
We meet on equal terms. Consider that
Until you have recovered health and strength
You are my guest within this hostelry."

155 Then Catherine with dignity replied :

" Monsieur Protentius, you would surfeit me
With grace. Your generosity can not be termed.
What act of kindness have I rendered you
That thus you seek to load me with rewards ?

160 You saved my life :— nay more, you checked the act
Of violence that is the greatest crime
Before the face of God, a suicide.

But not contented with the noble deed
You press upon me favors, when you know

165 Monsieur that I can not refuse. You take
Advantage of my weakness, gentle sir.

If you had given me a paltry gift
I could return you thanks with easy tongue ;
But when munificence is thus bestowed

170 The mind is powerless to frame its thanks,
And give the vocal impulse to the tongue,
The viaduct of thought."

At these remarks
The eye of Bertrand kindled with a strange
Expression, which betrayed his feelings, but

175 His countenance remained the same. To her
Decided speech, which much surprised the heir,
Because above her station, he replied ;
In language as refined :

" I recognize

Your feelings Catherine, and would request
180 That you refrain from mentioning the fact

Again. When one bestows a favor thanks
 Are due of course, but sterling gratitude
 Is seldom signified by words alone,
 But by the manifold expressions of
 185 The lively sentiment upon the face.
 In this unconscious manner you reveal
 The strength of your emotions, which to me
 Is all-sufficiency of gratitude.
 So do not speak about the circumstance
 190 Again."

To which our heroine replied ;
 " 'Tis as you wish : your word to me
 Must be my cardinal observance now."
 But Bertrand hastily replied to this ;
 " Oh I beseech you not to bind yourself
 195 To deem my wishes mandates, and submit
 To arbitrary whims that I may have."
 " Again consider your requests decrees,"
 She answered ; but again he spoke with warmth,
 " But you must place a boundary to this
 200 Entire resignation : now assume
 That I should wish you to be partner in
 Some crime, to murder, rob, or to commit
 A secret wrong, how would you then reply ? "
 With ringing voice the invalid returned,
 205 That monitor, my conscience, tells me no ! "
 Again the heir of Anjou questioned her :
 " But I have done you favors, saved your life :
 Suppose that I desire that you should tell
 A falsehood, that you may exonerate
 210 Me of an accusation, or to break
 The Sabbath that I might increase my gain ? "
 " It would not be ingratitude at all
 If I refused," our Catherine returned
 With earnestness, " No deed of kindness should
 215 Seduce a spotless soul's integrity.
 The human being that repays a mean
 Beneficiary by consenting to
 An act of dark iniquity, performs
 A sacrifice contemptible and vile,
 220 And helps the villain to his den in Hell
 By aiding to corrupt his soul the more."
 While speaking color clothed her face, and lent

- A crimson beauty to the pallid cheek.
Her dignity became intensified,
225 While from her eye there sprang a fire that met
The negative in Bertrand's glance, and both
Were conscious of a passion never felt
Before — the primal knitting of a pair
Of noble hearts. Her speech was answered thus:
230 " I heartily endorse your sentiments :
They harmonize with my convictions, stir
The moral forces to the core, and charge
The stagnant qualities with zeal. 'Tis truth :
For listened to, the conscience tells the wrong,
235 And regulates the heart and soul of man."
Then turning from the line of thought he said,
" Now tell me Catherine the story of
Your contemplated suicide. It would
Be interesting to extreme, I'm sure."
240 " At this the crimson tide forsook her cheek,
A shade of sadness took its place ; but how
Entrancing to the eye of Bertrand, who
Observed the slightest change. She turned and
gazed
Upon the landscape through the windows, then
245 In language grave and sorrowful began :
" A strange experience indeed I've had :
I try to think of how I did the act :
Madame had told me to begone, and I
Was cast upon the world again. Despair
250 Had conquered me, and in its grip I knew
Not what I did. My faith was gone, and I
Was weak indeed. Along the road I passed,
No kindly face accosted me, but all
Were too absorbed by other things to care
255 To speak to me. I staggered from the path
A fragment of the human race, detached ;
Without an aim or destination, lost,
Unsearched-for, and without a friend save God,
I heard the sound of water, and recalled
260 To mind the river, rocky banked and swift,
The thought of suicide engaged my mind ;
I could not cast it off ; I yielded, sought
The river bluff, and then without a word
I threw myself from off the precipice,

- 265 Yes I, who but a few short weeks ago
Had said, with stalwart speech and flashing eye,
'The prince of cowards is the suicide,
And I will not be one.' Its human though:
Tis not the lusty blows that break our strength,
270 But subtile tappings that subdue at length.
"The moment that I sprang I heard a voice
Exclaim 'Desist!' It was too late; I fell.
The freshets of the Spring had swelled the stream,
And recent rains had magnified its size:
275 The rocks were covered, and instead of hard
Relentless spines of rocky death, I struck
The yielding water. Fortunate for me
I fell aright, or else the shock perchance
Had proved a mortal blow. I sank, I rose.
280 Bewildered by the stunning fall I lay
Upon the water weak and limp. I felt
A movement near, a hand sustained my head,
The firmament turned black—I knew no more.
I 'woke to find Madame in great distress.
285 I lay upon my bed; some little time
Was necessary to recover sense,
And many hours had passed before my brain
Consented to renew its duties in
My weary head. So here I am again."
290 She ceased the painful narrative, and sank
Upon the cushions of her chair. But for
A moment only was she weak; the strong
Recov'ring will declared itself, and rose
In all its majesty from deep despair.
295 Then Bertrand spoke reflectively when she
Had ceased, as though his mind was lost among
The mystic grottos of the human soul.
"Tis singular how intricate the acts
Of mortals are. The nature manifests
300 Itself by curious behaviors, wild
And inexplicable. Irrational
In moods, it lacks in motives for dislikes
And likes. At certain periods consumed
With will and charged with zeal, defying fate
305 And force; at others feeble and devoid
Of resolution, lacking fortitude,
Indifferent of responsibility

To God, itself, and to its fellow men."

310 "How strange," said Catherine, "that I should be
So weak, when I had vowed to face the world
And all its woe."

Then Bertrand answered thus ;

"But did not great Elijah do the same?
He looked the heathen nation in the face,
Nor felt a tremor of dismay, although
315 A nod from Ahab would have sentenced him
To instant death. But when the day had passed,
A threat from Jezebel alarmed his soul,
For then he prayed for death. Who ever knew
A nature that possessed such stamina
320 Of spirit as to keep the resolution firm
In spite of all distressing incidents.
While mighty natures crave competitors
They cannot always struggle: weakness comes
When strength is needed most; the frailest point
325 Will be assaulted by the enemy,
And when we boast of vigor and control
Our fall is near."

As he concluded the
Madame appeared.

"Now Catherine, I fear
You need to rest. Monsieur, will you excuse
330 The invalid; she must be careful, not
To so indulge herself in company
As to imperil her recovery."

"Oh pray do not consider me," returned
The heir, but do what you esteem to be
335 The proper thing." Then turned to Catherine,
"I very much regret that you must go:
I seldom have enjoyed a colloquy
That gave me keener pleasure."

"Thanks Monsieur,"

Returned the girl, and with a courtly bow
340 She rose, and leaning on Madame withdrew.

THIRD SECTION.

When they had gone and Bertrand was alone,
He paced the floor and meditated thus:

"Is that a peasant girl? Oh no she's not!

- Such brilliant speech and polished etiquette
 345 Were not developed in an humble home.
 Those dainty hands are not accustomed to
 The deeds of labor, nor those features cast
 Within the mould of poverty. Such ease,
 And elegance of conduct charmed my eyes,
 350 Especially because it was abrupt
 And unexpected. I had first resolved
 To ask the reason of it all, but feared
 Repulse: her dignified behavior chilled
 Inquisitive desire; so I curbed
 355 My curiosity. But still there is
 A mystery connected with this girl
 Which puzzles me so much, that I will strive
 With all my power to elucidate.”
- Then turning he retired to his room.
 360 The sun had set: the shadows played about
 The chamber with a bolder glee. He sank
 Upon a chair, and leaning back, his hands
 Behind his head, he gazed with dreamy eyes
 Upon the vanishing display of light.
 365 His nature was not sentimental, but
 He felt a lonesome feeling creep upon
 His soul — a yearning, powerful as will,
 Intangible as fate. At first he knew
 Not what it was, and wondered why his heart
 370 Beat slower and his breast grew cold. As though
 Emerging from a mist, the reason dawned
 Upon his mind in slow degrees. The room
 Grew darker as he sat, and from the gloom
 And from the figure motionless arose
 375 A soft and plaintive ballad, as he sang
 In tone subdued and voice of gentle pitch.

THE SONG.

- 1 “ Oh I’m lonely, I’m lonely; I long for caress
 From a nature that’s loving, whose lips I can press;
 Whose reciprocal tenderness answers to mine
 380 With a sweetness of impulse so nearly divine.
 2 “ There’s a void in my heart that is yearning
 for love,
 From a soul whose affections can lift me above,
 In a stratum delightful, away from the noise

- And fatigues of a life, for a season of joys.
385 3 "Oh I'm lonely" I'm lonely; I long to embrace
Such a creature my fancy conceives, full of grace
And attractions, with nobler and loftier mind
Than is granted to most of the mortals I find.
4 "To the world I am cold, and affection would
seem
390 To their wondering eyes but a craze and a dream;
I am often persuaded myself they are right,
Till the match is applied—and the candle is light.
5 "There are times when a sigh will refuse to be
quelled,
Though in check by the spirit a period held;
395 It will break the proud fetters and tell to the heart
That it longs for the joy that a kiss can impart
6 "Ah my spirit is haughty, but cannot control
The rich waves of emotion that rush through my
soul:
Though I strive in my pride to restrain the quick
breath—
400 Yet the heart is the master, though love should
be death.
7 "Oh I'm lonely I'm lonely; no arms to entwine
In a circle my neck, or a head to recline
On a shoulder that longs to be pressed by a
wreath
Of soft ringlets, with flashes of rapture beneath.
405 8 "Though the intellect mocks at the mention of
love,
And esteems such a thing only fit for a dove,
Yet affection is stronger, and hurls from its path
Opposition and fate, in the might of its wrath.
9 "In the silence of solitude trembles a groan,
110 And I start to discover the truant my own:
Such a wail of despondency! can it then be
That I long for affection in such a degree?
10 "Ah this solitude casts on my spirits a gloom,
That I often repulse as a shadow of doom;
415 So I wrap up my heart in its lonely restraint,
And will try to live on without word of complaint."

Now we must let an interval occur
Of half a week, and meet our hero as

- He leaves his lady, that we may become
 420 Aware of how that interval was spent.
 "How charming is this maiden, full of life
 And frolic, yet how dignified withal.
 Her manner, sweet and gentle, captivates
 A mind polite; while in her bearing there
 425 Exists a principle, austere but kind,
 That charms a true and wholesome instinct, yet
 Repulses all familiar conduct. Such
 Discovery three days have made, since first
 I recognized her great accomplishments
 430 Which have convinced me that this maiden was
 Not born beneath a roof of thatch."

- Another day has passed: in order to
 Be cognizant of what the lady thinks,
 It will be necessary to become
 435 A spy; so let us hide among the leaves
 Of this delicious rose upon her breast,
 That guards the gate of love, and listen as
 She murmurs sweet confession to herself.
 "How very kind Madame has been to me:
 440 She really tries to make amends for her
 Extreme unkindness unto me before.
 And then Monsieur Protentius! how he loves
 To talk, and sit, and walk with me. He says
 He knows no other pleasure. Can it be
 445 Unhappy man! I wish I could relieve
 A portion of his troubles. Anything
 That I could do I gladly would devote
 To cheering his despondency. How good
 He is; how circumspect in conduct, strong
 450 In carriage; in behavior how superb;
 And what refined deportment. Certainly
 A choicer specimen of man can not
 Be found. I wonder why he does not come?
 "What am I thinking of! am I in love?
 455 A child of Normandy enraptured with
 A perfect stranger! No, it must not be.
 But nonsense! haughtiness is out of place
 At present. I am not the heiress of
 The Duke of Normandy, a peer of France
 460 And wealthy, but a particle of dust,

Suspended in the boundless sunlight of
The universe of God ; without a home,
A fortune, or protector from attacks
Of adversaries that encompass me.

465 " But maidens must not thus confess their love.
Still, why ? It is absurd for me to fear
To make confession to my secret mind.
The intellect indeed must be without
Responsibility if it can not

470 Preserve the tender secrets of the heart.
I must acknowledge that this handsome, young,
And talented Monsieur has won my heart.
For many days he has been constantly
Within my sight, and I assure myself
475 With all conceit that he doth love me much."

Now she is interrupted by Madame,
Who enters and cuts short the reverie.

Another day has passed, and then we meet
Our hero in his room. He paces up
480 And down with restless air, and half aloud
Declaims an interesting monologue.

" What charming misery this is ! to be
Enraptured with a woman without hope
Of marrying. 'Tis worse than gazing at
485 A chest of gold while pinched with poverty.
Betrothed to Catherine of Normandy,
In love with Catherine of Anjou inn.
I long to make proposal to the girl ;
But such a thing would stir the wrath of him
490 From whom the means proceed — my father — he
Would probably disown his son for such
An act of disobedience. I love
The girl with all my heart : the magnet in
Her soul has touched my heart of steel, and both
495 Have clung together. Such a nature as
Her own has harmonized with mine : so sweet,
So strong : a woman, and a mortal ; but
A being that I feel with subtle thrill
Of instinct was created for my arms,
500 As well as I for hers. Yes, I'm in love —
A love that elevates and dignifies ;
Refines and chastens all the faculties ;

With noble ardour stimulates to new
Activity the dormant attributes."

505 Then sitting down he mused awhile; was lost
In meditation:—should he speak to her,
And if she favored him, to marry her,
And take the consequence? He pondered long:
At last it was decided; yes, he would.

510 Now misery began anew: would she
Accept his suit? He felt with all his heart
She would, and yet his haughty nature shrank
From ignominious repulse. How would
He feel; the heir of Anjou's coronet,

515 To be refused—and by a peasant girl
For all he knew, although refined, and of
A courtly bearing. But his mind was made:
He would advance his proposition on
The morrow, and await the dread reply.

FOURTH SECTION.

520 The garden is our stage when next we meet.
The curtain rises on the scene: upon
A rustic bench is seated Catherine,
Who knits with industry, and breathes the pure
Delightful air, and basks in sunshine's smile.

525 Madame appears, and says in gentle tone,
"Now come my child, you have been out enough:
I fear the morning is too damp for you."

"Oh not at all Madame," replied the girl
In haste, "the dewy atmosphere imparts
530 A salutary stimulant throughout
My constitution."

"That may be the case,"
Returned Madame, "but you have sat at least
One hour my child."

To which the girl replied,
"But I am feeling very well Madame."
535 "And much it gratifies me that you are,"
Madame rejoined, "so do not have relapse
By doing that which would precipitate
Your illness."

Still the girl persisted, "But
Madame, it is so lovely here; I wish

540 To stay."

"Then I will not object: but do
Be cautious Catherine."

"I will Madame."

As disappeared the dame upon the right
The heir of Anjou entered, with his head
Inclined in meditation's posture on
545 His breast, but on observing Catherine
He noiselessly approached, and touching her
Upon the shoulder notified thereby
Of his appearance at her side.
She turned with violent start; exclaimed
"Monsieur!"

550 And for a single moment seemed unnerved.

"What, frightened at my feeble touch?" the heir
Inquired.

Recovering she said, "Your step
Is silent as the snow in stocking feet."
The crimson hue returned with vividness,
555 But what the cause of that has been we must
Conjecture, for we cannot know.

Upon
The bench, but at respectful distance sat
The youth, and to the duchess in disguise
Remarked, observing her the while,
"I'm glad
560 To meet you here: how lonesome I have been
Without your company."

The beauty raised
Her eyes to his with calm indifferent glance.
"Indeed Monsieur! you flatter me to thus
Confess that I am such a factor in
565 Your peace and happiness." But while she spoke
It tested all the mighty energies
Within her slight physique to curb the waves
Of scarlet hue that sought her cheek with fierce
Determination, and required a firm
570 Resistance and a vigorous will to force
The undulating breast to cease its quick
Expression, and expel the ardent fire
Of rapture from her eye.

"Indeed you are,
And more;" the heir replied with fervent tongue,

- 575 "The index hand of rapture points to you,
 And counsels me to satisfy the great
 And honest craving that I have within.
 In you the attributes of womankind
 Attain their highest quality. Within
 580 The compass of your presence life assumes
 A different aspect, and becomes a vale
 Of paradise."

- The feelings of the girl
- Had now approached rebellion's point, but still
 The proud exalted soul refused to flinch.
 585 "You startle me Monsieur," she answered, cool
 As water-lilies on a summer's day.
 "Indeed the tone of your address is not
 In harmony with our respective ranks."
 But Bertrand was not thus to be repulsed.
 590 "You are no peasant! what the mystery
 Can be defies my skill to manifest.
 You are an equal and a lady: I
 Esteem you such; for etiquette and speech
 Have played the traitor, and exposed the truth.
 595 Now Catherine excuse these random words,
 This lack of ceremony and the eager speech,
 And hearken to the language of my soul;
 For when I say 'I love you' can I treat
 Upon the subject in more hallowed, deep,
 600 Convincing or impressive terms?"

Then with

Her manner still unruffled she inquired,
 "What have I to assure me that you mean
 The words you speak?"

- At which the heir replied,
- "By testimony rendered by yourself:
 605 For have you not expressed surprise that I,
 A gentleman, would condescend to woo
 A peasant girl? — which you in truth are not!
 I hazard all for you; for if you should
 Be lowly born it would not alter my
 610 Resolve at all, for I would marry, love,
 And cherish you the same, in spite of all."

Then drawing closer, while her knitting dropped,
 He pressed his suit; and while the tender words
 Were trembling in her ears her face outshone

- 615 Aurora's rosy flush. He took her hand,
And spoke in gentle, yet in manly voice.
"I would that I could crystalize my thoughts,
That you might be convinced my motives are
As pure as angel's breath. I seek thy love,
620 And would a suitor be unto a heart
That beats responsive to emotion's thrill.
Ah lady, thou dost know it not, but on
Thy cheek the graphic revelation of
Thy tender sentiments is there displayed.
625 The heart, more sensitive, can not conceal
Emotions, and defies the mind. The hand
I hold doth tremble—not with fear, but with
The conflict of the feelings. I can see
The battle of emotions in the eye,
630 Dilated, and upon the lip, within
The heaving breast, that unbeknown to thee
Is far too circumscribed to thus restrain
The overflowing passions of thy heart.
Unlock the bonds of sweet reserve, that they
635 As unimprisoned birds may seek my breast,
And gratify the starving void within
My being that doth hunger for thy love.
Respond, do not withhold the riches of
Affection, but bestow them on the one
640 Who now implores the precious boon."

The p ut

- Up feelings of the maid had mutinied,
Displayed themselves as Bertrand had described.
But with a struggle fiercer than the clash
Of arms she beat emotion back again,
645 And sitting proudly up she waved her hand,
Remarking thus :
"Monsieur, be kind enough
To walk about, and leave me to myself
A period," for Catherine was still
650 An invalid.
"Of course," the heir replied ;
And bowing deferentially withdrew ;
Remarking to himself, with little laugh,
"An emperor would not have courage to
Defy that stern command. A peasant girl !"
655 When Bertrand had retired her thoughts revolved

Within her brain, confused and meaningless :
 But soon the rational exercise of clear
 And ordered reason sprang from chaos, for
 It soon expressed itself in these remarks :

- 660 " Indeed I'm in profound predicament!
 What shall my answer be? If I refuse
 I spurn the man I love ; yes love, with all
 The ardent nature of a woman's heart,
 A woman's mind, a woman's being, that
 665 Desires but love in recompense, and yearns
 For pure affection to requite her soul.
 If I accept, I take within my arms
 A stranger, though the savior of my life ;
 Who gives me proof of his devotedness
 670 By urging me to marry him — without
 A friend or dowry but my meager self.
 Again I say I love him ; and without
 Considering his means, or prospect to
 Relieve my wants ; without inquiring
 675 About his history, but taking him
 As he would also me, I will accept
 His brief proposal and consent to be
 His wife. Monsieur Protentius !

Hearing this

- Imperious command, the heir appeared
 680 Before his lady-love, remarking, " As
 A queen commands her general before
 Her, I am here."

- Reclining with a mieu
 Of regal haughtiness the maiden thus
 Remarked :

- " Monsieur, your course is singular ;
 685 You have addressed my love in ardent terms,
 Without research in to my former life,
 Extraction or my character. You would
 Accept me as I am, and trust the depth
 Of my integrity for your reward.
 690 Your earnestness I cannot doubt : your speech
 Of love was heated in a furnace, white
 With heart consuming glow and fevered state,
 The quiver of your frame discloses how
 Intense your feelings are, and animates
 695 Your features with convincing strength, alike

Sincere and obvious."

Maliciously

She smiled within herself to thus return
The criticism he had made of her
When tendering his love.

700 To keep me in suspense," the passionate
Appeal burst forth.

"Control yourself Monsieur,"

Returned the girl, though deep emotions stirred
Her noble soul. "The gravity of this
Occasion interdicts unseemly haste.

705 Your zeal prohibits doubt of earnestness;
Your knowledge of my present state assures
Me that the reason which incited you
To tender overtures of love to me
Can not be criticised, and therefore, as
710 I heartily reciprocate the love,
I will accept."

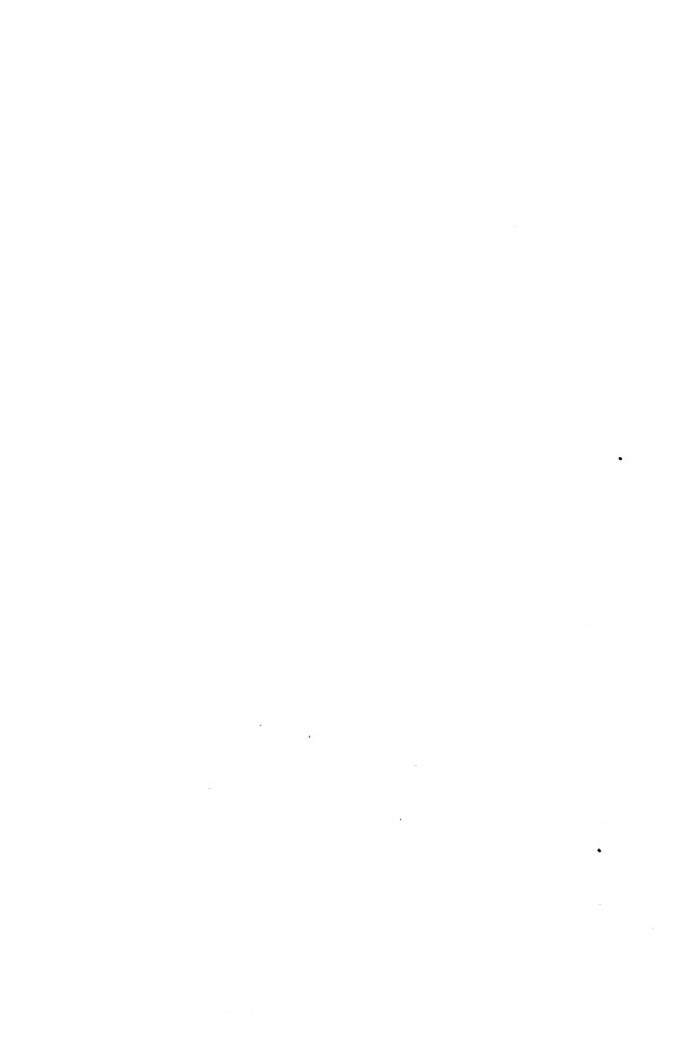
She rose, and in his arms
Was clasped in strong emotional embrace.

FIFTH SECTION.

But why should we, with vulgar gaze observe
The passionate expression of a love
715 Before restrained, but now so ardently
Exchanged. We cannot feel as they; nor can
Appreciate the fervent joy that swells
The bosom, nor experience the rush
Of noble passions at the binding of
720 These virgin hearts. Tis not for us to gaze
Upon the sweet, half-sobbing ecstasy
Of first embrace, nor at the multiplied
Caresses, as the lips, with greeting warm
Exchange the tender touch. So let us leave
725 Them to themselves. Rebuke the jeer,
Reproach the laugh that rises to the lip.
Is not this sweet occasion one that God
Has honored with his blessing? so refrain
From heartless sneers. What though the loving
cheeks
730 Are pressed together with a tender hug,

- And thrills of rapture surge within the veins ;
 What though they emanate, with voice intense,
 Endearing attributes in eager ears,
 As, clinging to each other they out-pour
 735 A torrent of affection in their love :—
 The sight is not for us. So we withdraw,
 And leave them solitary in their joy.
 The cold, proud, stately air of Catherine
 Dis-solves before the glowing heat of love.
 740 This heat of love had softened, and the blows
 Of fierce adversity had welded fast
 The hearts that all before were frigid and
 Unyielding ; for observe what Bertrand says
 As we return and listen, as they calmly sit
 745 Enchained within each other's warm embrace.
 " Felicity sublime ! " the heir remarks,
 " Has mortal happiness exceeded this ? "
 " I venture not," returns the future bride.
 Again he spoke : " How sweet to human souls
 750 Is this ecstatic period of love.
 Tis new to me ; my frigid heart has been
 Insensible to all assaults of love.
 And yet emotion was not wanting there,
 But waiting to be thrilled by passion, pure
 755 And earnest, stable as a mountain spire.
 " For love is pivot of the universe,
 The axle which the fates revolve around,
 The link connecting Earth with Paradise,
 The cord with which our human hearts are bound
 760 " Our lives would cheerless deserts almost be
 If not for Heav'n's inspiring gift of love ;
 It flavors Nature's draught of life, and wins
 A royal benediction from above."
 " Why Bertrand dearest," Catherine remarked
 765 " You speak in poetry ! "
 He thus replied :
 " But why are you surprised my Catherine :
 Is not this season of affection fraught
 With sentiments of love's expressive speech ?
 Tis often thought that poetry is fit
 770 For sentimental swains and love-sick maids,
 Unworthy of a higher end and aim.
 Such verdict is unjust : we may indulge

- Our fancies in this pleasing way, and seek
To illustrate our sentiments in verse,
775 And yet ascribe to it a nobler task.
The evening zephyr fans the fervid cheek,
When heated by the torrid summer's sun,
But when excited into anger, smites
And devastates a province with its might."
- 780 Then halting for a moment to impress
A demonstration, he continued thus :
" And now, my Catherine, as we have kept
The secret of our private lives, and loved
And won for our affections' sake, would not
785 It be most seemly to relate our own
Peculiar histories, that we may be
Informed about the past of each our lives? "
- " I certainly agree," said Catherine,
But both experienced a vague, a dread,
790 Uncomfortable impression in the breast.
" With pleasure then," resumed the noble youth,
" I tell you of my house and rank; for I
Am not a private gentleman, but shall
Esteem it honor to escort you to
795 The princely palace of my sire; for I
Am Bertrand, son and heir of Anjou's duke."
- Our Catherine had passed through harsh ordeals,
Experienced the violent rage of pride
In chains, and poverty, and shame; but all
800 Were now engaging in discordant strife
Within her bosom, only lately healed.
She turned, and gazed with searching look upon
Her loved affianced; her natural pride
Predominated: with a lofty air
805 She rose — a duchess undisguised. With form
Erect and shoulders back she cast a brief,
Disdainful, and half-sneering look upon
The man who thus would place himself above
Her rank. Her voice resounded as the ring
810 Of tempered steel, as proudly she exclaimed,
" And I am Catherine of Normandy,"



CANTO V.

THE RETRIBUTION.

"Our miseries are ended, yours begin."

FIRST SECTION.

Our scenery must change: in place of sights
And sounds of rural life, we meet within
The ducal palace of Lörd Bértränd's sire.

Within the drawing room the Duke and court

5 Are entertaining Normandy, as when
We first became acquainted with the group.

Omitting weary details, we will pierce

The subject to the pith, and listen to

The Duke of Normandy, who thus begins:

10 "Your grace, your message of three weeks ago

Was duly read and answered, and the fact

Your son was absent for a month, upon

Important business was respected; but

I felt a great relief when I received

15 Your missive, for a greater favor could

Have hardly been bestowed, although your act

Was all-unconsciously performed. If you

Had not delayed the time of marriage I

Would certainly have had to have it done."

20 This information stirred the Duchess' tongue:

"Why you surprise me very much, your grace."

"But more astonished you will be, when I

Conclude my narrative, dear lady," said the Duke.

A moment's pause, he then continued:

"When

25 Arriving at my castle, I had told

My daughter of betrothal to your son,

She soon evinced rebellious tendencies

And had the singular audacity
To beg of me to reconsider my
30 Decision."

" Oh impossible! " exclaimed
The Duchess, and the Duke of Anjou said,
" You fill me with profound astonishment,
Your grace."

The Duke of Normandy resumed:
" Of course a blunt refusal was the sum
35 And substance of my answer, but I told
My daughter that I did not tolerate
Dispute, and couched in such severe
Expressions and demeanor that she left
The room without reply, although t was plain
40 That she was agitated to extreme.
She thereupon retired to her room,
And if she had eloped with morning mists
She had not dissappeared with more success."

" Can such a thing be true? " the Duchess spoke
45 With wonder in her voice. Her husband said,
" You say, your grace, your daughter ran away? "
" I nothing said, your grace, she disappeared
And that is all I know," replied the Duke.

" Have you not searched for her? " inquired her
grace.
50 " Of course, your grace," the Duke responded,
" Woods
And streams — the land has been explored, to yield
A trace of her."

" And all in vain? " her grace
The Duchess asked.

" In vain," replied the lord
Of Normandy, and Anjou murmured low,
55 " How very sad! you think that she has drowned
Herself? "

" I am at loss to know what she
Has done," rejoined the guest with frequent sighs,
" She had retired, while all her clothing lay
As she had disappareled for the night.
60 Her jewels undisturbed — in brief, had she
Been sleeping in her chamber when alarm
Was sounded, it could not have furnished less
Of clew and circumstance than when I first

Was called to view the room. I never knew
65 A mystery so barren, starved of facts
To manifest obscurity, or clews
And hints to help elucidate a case."

With wonder in her voice the Duchess asked,
"But does your grace desire that we should know
70 That she had disappeared without a word,
Or taken any article of dress?"

"Her sleeping vesture I except; and that
Is what alarms me most: I fear that she
Has gone to some secluded spot, and cast
75 Herself within the water there."

The Duke
Was much affected, and was silent for
A time: the ducal pair maintained their peace.

Then Anjou murmured half aloud, "This is
Distressing!" then of Normandy inquired,
80 "But why had she objections to our son?"

"I really do not know; nor did I give
Her opportunity to tell."

They all
Relapsed in silence for awhile, then spoke
The host: "And has your grace the story spread
85 Abroad!" and Normandy arousing, said,

"The servants of my house, the soldiers, and
The peasantry contiguous, alone
Are cognizant of the affair."

"But why
Conceal the fact," his grace of Anjou asked,
90 "Why not promulgate to the land around
The story of her disappearance strange
And sudden."

"I will tell your graces why,"
Rejoined the Duke. "Of course I must expect
To have my orders and directions all
95 Obeyed implicitly: but have you not
Experienced a feeling of regret,
Akin to real remorse pursuing acts
Which conscience tells you to be right, and yet
You almost wish you had not done?"

"Ah yes,"
100 The Duke of Anjou slowly answered him,
"Tis one of many things that mar the peace

Of mind, alas ! ”

His Duchess added thus :

“ And from the minuend of happiness
Subtracts the joy.”

- Then Normandy — “ The cause
105 Of my concern is that I did not give
Her audience, to speak to me of her
Dissatisfaction, even though it might
Have been a trivial complaint. But she
Has reached the age of womanhood, and should
110 Perhaps be recognized, and not denied
Theright to give opinion in a case
Of such importance as her marriage to
Your son.” and Anjou murmured thoughtfully,
“ Tis true.”

- The Duke of Normandy resumed :
115 “ It really quite unnerves me with the thought
That by my harshness I have driven her
To suicide, if such should really be
The case.”

- The conscience stricken father turned
Away to hide his deep emotion. Then
120 The host observed, “ But were you not convinced
Your action was of justice born ? ”
“ Perhaps,”
Was doubtfully returned. “ But then the bleak
And grim result.”

- Again the three relapsed
In thought, until the Duke of Anjou spoke :
125 “ Your grace of Normandy, I have to make
A slight confession, which, as you have so
Explained the disappearance, of your child,
Is proper right and just to you. The day
Of your departure from beneath our roof
130 My son was guilty of a serious act —
Of stirring up dissensions in my house ;
Not quite insurgency, but setting bad
Examples of a dangerous habit, as,
Expressing his opinion of my acts,
135 My motives ; which, on finding out
I sent him from the residence, to stay
A month beyond my sight, until I could
Forget my anger. But paternal love,

- Assisted by her grace, was far too strong
 140 For me to countervail. I yielded, sent
 For him. The messengers returned, they could
 Not find a trace of him. I did not want
 To publish his recall throughout the land,
 For that would also tell his banishment.”
- 145 At which the Duke of Normandy replied :
 “ But how much more do I experience
 Of grief, when I consider that my child
 Is lost, I know not where — in water, or
 The grave, or wanderer upon the earth.”
- 150 Their troubles occupied their thoughts a time,
 And then again the Duke of Anjou spoke :
 “ But what do you propose to do, your grace ? ”
 “ I will return,” responded Normandy,
 “ And if my child has not been seen or heard
 155 From, then I will announce a search throughout
 The duchy, and implore his majesty
 To aid me in pursuit.”
- “ And you return ? ”
 Inquired the host, and Normandy replied,
 “ To-morrow.”
- Then the Duke of Anjou turned,
 160 And to his Duchess said : —
 “ Shall we not
 Escort his grace to his dominions ? it
 Would be a pleasant journey I am sure.”
 “ With pleasure,” was her grace’s answer : then
 The host remarked,
 “ Your grace, with your consent
 165 We will accompany yourself and train
 To your estate.”
- The guest with feeling bowed,
 And answered him :
 “ I owe you many thanks
 For these expressions of fraternal state.”
- His grace of Anjou rang a bell, and then
 170 Replied, “ Tis nothing.” — To the page who quick
 Responded, “ Lord Augustus.” — To the guest
 Continued, “ Mention it no more.”
- His wife
 The sentence supplemented, saying, with
 A smile, “ Allusion to the matter is

175 To magnify a trifle."

" But I fear
I am a burden to your graces, for
Your courtesy is great indeed, and will
Destroy your comfort if persisted in."

My Lord Augustus entered at this point,
180 And Anjou to him gave his orders thus:

" My lord, to-morrow we escort his grace
To his estate: be kind enough to see
That all is ready for the journey thence."

" Your wishes need no second word, your grace,"
185 Responded Lord Augustus with a bow.
The ducal party rose, and Anjou said.
" The morning sun will see us on our way."

SECOND SECTION.

We now revert attention to the inn, and see
Lord Bertrand enter, pulling on his gloves.

190 " I thought that Catherine was here: it seems
That she has been detained. We go to walk
This morning. She is getting better fast.

" Most certainly this is a novel case:

I had decided to address the girl

195 Before I knew her rank; her innate charms
Acomplishing the issue of the love:

For notwithstanding my espousal to
The daughter of the Duke of Normandy,
I set my heart upon a love that knew

200 No check; determined that the one to choose
The bride was certainly the swain, and not
The sire. However, I had nerved myself
To face severest opposition, and

Resolved to leave my fathers palace and
205 Enlist beneath the banner of the king,
(Providing that his grace could not succed
In thwarting my designs, if so resolved,)

Before submitting to be married to
A woman that I'd never seen. But now

210 A major part of all embarrassments
Have disappeared, vexations overcome,
Discordant circumstances harmonized,
The only obstacle that interferes

With consummating courtship by the act
 215 Of marriage is the lady's sire; and should
 He persevere in animosity
 Against his daughter, all that we can do
 Is to avoid him totally. But then,
 My father might object — insist that wives
 220 Must bring a dowry: that would but compel
 Me to assert my independence as
 Before. My Catherine would not retreat
 A step before his grace her father, but
 With haughty bearing wait for him to broach
 225 The reconciliation of the two."

The door swung open; Catherine appeared,
 As radiant as only she could be.

"My lord!" she said, in voice of silver tone.
 But Bertrand answered her, with troubled look
 230 And voice,

"Do not address me so; my name
 Is magnified into a melody
 Of love when uttered by your tuneful lips.
 It always sounded harsh and meaningless
 Until inspired by your lyric voice."

235 With cordial greeting Catherine replied,
 "No other but your christian name I'll speak.
 I've kept you waiting Bertrand dear; I hope
 Your patience has been equal to the task."
 At which the heir responded lovingly,

240 "It always is when you are culprit dear.—
 Now haste!" and passing through the garden door
 They disappeared, with feelings light as down.

But scarcely have they passed beyond our sight,
 Nor have their foot-falls even died away,
 245 When at the door in front a knock is heard —
 A knocking meant to rouse the inmates who
 Perhaps were sleeping overmuch.

Madame
 Appears, exclaiming to herself, "There is
 A person at the door," and soon it swung
 250 A-side, admitting gentlemen that we
 Have seen before — the Treasurers of both
 Estates, Augustus and Sebastian.

Lord
 Augustus greeted the Madame in brief

Expression, to her consternation, thus :

- 255 " His grace the Duke of Anjou, with her grace
The Duchess, and his grace of Normandy,
Will soon demand your hospitality."

At this Madame replied in great dismay

- 260 " Oh how do you expect me to prepare
An entertainment for their graces in
So short a time? "

" Now do not be alarmed,"

Sebastian gently said, consoling her,

" Your guests are not fastidious at all,

And will expect but in proportion to

- 265 Your capabilities to entertain."

And Lord Augustus supplemented thus:

" Prepare a lunch, as simple as you please :

I'm sure their graces would enjoy a plain

Substantial meal in preference to all

- 270 Concoctions of a pastry cook. Now do
Not fret, but simply do the best you can."

" I hear the bugle! " said Sebastian, " Haste
Madame, and make your preparations."

" Stay

Within, my lord," Augustus said, as he

- 275 Withdrew to meet the ducal party, while
Sebastian tarried to receive the guests.

" How long will they remain, my lord? "

Inquired the Madame.

" 'T will not be long,"

Said he, " An hour or so: their graces have

- 280 Escorted Normandy as far as this,
And leave him here.— But you had better haste."

Madame retired, and soon the Dukes and trains
Appeared, and took possession of the room.

" Your graces will excuse the poverty

- 285 Of your reception, as the inn was not
Prepared for such invasions." Thus the kind
Sebastian made apology for the
Madame.

The Duchess answered, " Do not thus
Disturb yourself, my lord; tis perfectly

- 290 Excusable."

" Have you arranged for lunch
My lord," the Duke of Anjou asked.

“ I have

Your grace,” Augustus answered, and the Duke
Resumed,

“ The journey makes me hungry ; same
With you your grace ? ” and Normandy replied,
295 “ The same, your grace : the morning air provokes
My appetite, until it rivals that
Of starving wolves.”

At this Madame appeared,
And bowed to Lord Sebastian from the door.
The peer observed:

“ The lunch is ready now ;

300 And if your graces will repair thereto
Madame will strive to do her best for you.”

THIRD SECTION.

Has not the reader often noticed how
A tiny vortex will attract the bits
Of floating matter separated by
305 Considerable space, and concentrate
The atoms ? Thus the moving vortex of
The fates — or Providence — is bringing all
The characters together in our tale.
The scene to next engage our interest
310 Is in the garden, by the bench where sat
The lovers but a day or two ago.

A person enters slowly, seats himself
In silence, and appears to bear a load
Of trouble, heavy, burdensome. Upon
315 His face dejection and despair have hewn
Deep furrows in a countenance of stone.
But listen while he speaks, and see if we
Can recognize familiar tones of voice.

“ Well here I am again ; a wanderer
320 Upon the surface of the globe. I can't
Remain at ease : my conscience goads me so
That when I sit and think it spears me with
Its poignant tip, till madness must ensue.”

He wearily arose and paced the path.
325 “ So restless have I been for these few days
That I have not remained in one abode
For any length of time. I thought I would

- Return unto the inn, and by a hint
 Or word discover if the bodies of
 330 The two were found upon the jagged rocks.
 I promptly left the bluff as soon as I
 Beheld the suicides. I did not wish to stay."
 He stopped his countermarching and resumed
 His seat; then raised himself and glanced around.
 335 "Alone with silence: yet doth silence speak
 A grave and fitting tongue to such as I.
 In all its grim and weary solitude
 It steals within the portals of the soul.
 When noises indiscriminate pervade
 340 Then is the drowsy conscience lulled to sleep:
 When all withdraw, and Silence walks upon
 The pavement of the soul with stately tread,
 Each echo rings as pulses in the ear,
 Which though we seem to hear, we hear them not.
 345 Up starts the frightened conscience from its sleep
 As though by adder bitten to its death.
 But Silence ceases not its measured pace:
 As naught disturbs its solitary walk
 It countermarches through the corridors
 350 Of the immortal soul with ringing step,
 That stirs the guilty conscience to the core.
 And when the hushed and deathly phantom creeps
 Before the stricken spirit, bowed with grief,
 It turns its calm and holy eyes upon
 355 The touched and grieving heart in all its woe,
 And stealing off it leaves it with its God."
 Again the restless man arose and paced
 The garden walk; but billows of remorse
 Were started in his soul, and surged with hot,
 360 Impetuous vehemence through his being.
 "I feel the tortures of a fierce remorse,
 A consciousness of guilt, that lacerates
 My soul although it is as hard as flint—
 Such virtue doth compunction's edge possess.
 365 How well I recollect the stern advice
 My tutor once addressed to me: it burns
 My brain as I recall it to my mind.
 "Can you sport with thorns and thistles,
 Can you handle poignant bristles

370 And expect to feel them harmless as the lion mouths
of yore?

You will leave them torn and bleeding,
And your folly sorely needing
All the comfort it can gather to relieve the bitter
sore.”

Ah sinful man! that luscious morsel from
375 The vat of Hell has cost you dearly — pierced
Your vitals with its deadly sting, and scorched
Your writhing soul with thrice tormenting flames.
Again he sank upon the seat, and groaned:

“Oh horrors! black, eternal horrors! what
380 Can be the future of transported souls?
Inherent thought rebels against belief
That I am but a brute without a soul:
For I can feel the passion and the flood,
The conflict of the conscience with the base
385 And brutish appetites, that rot the flesh,
And drag the lofty nature from its throne.
The place prepared for carnal souls must be
A dungeon deep, where solitude in all
Its black and ghastly grimness reigns supreme;
390 That spirits doomed to everlasting woe
May weep and wail of their iniquity.”

Then sank the guilty wretch upon his knees;
His face was white with terror, as he seemed
To gaze with staring eyes in Hell itself.
395 The covering had fallen from his head;
One hand had grasped his hair; the other stretched
Beyond, as though to keep executors
Of wrath divine away; — while through his breast
The waves of anguish rolled, and threatened to
400 Divorce the soul and body with their might.

“It cannot be that Hell is but a place
Of never quenching fire, where all the bad
And criminal of the earth are swept as dust;
For such a punishment would be too mild.
405 I could with pleasure thrust my arm into
A pot of seething metal, watch the flesh
Roast, char, and drop from off the bone, and see
The sinews curl, and blood dry up, if I
Could render an atonement for the sin
410 Upon my conscience, burning in my soul.

- I could endure without a murmur all
 The maddest agonies of death, and deem
 Them but the scourging of a childish whip;
 I'd laugh and sing when in a tiger's grip,
 415 Though tearing limb from limb, and gnawing at
 My vitals with his hungry fangs — defy
 Him to his worst; would put my hand before
 An adder's teeth, receive his venom in
 My blood, and watch it swell, and feel the darts
 420 Of mortal torment sear my nerves — all these
 Would I endure without complaint, if I
 Could wash the ghastly sin from hand and heart:
 For when the conscience wakes to feel its sin,
 Its anguish then becomes the worst of woes."
- 425 The hitherto revengful man was now
 A victim of profound despair. His soul
 Had left its secret chamber, stood revealed
 Upon his countenance in agony
 Of grief. The horrors of the case had dawned
 430 Upon his mind successively, and torn
 His spirit as with tempest's rage. The dire
 Result of all his evil deeds arose
 Before his mind, and crushed his spirit with
 Its fearful weight. Oh had some gentle soul
 435 Been present, sympathized with him in his
 Distress, and led him to repentance, would
 There not have been a spirit saved from doom?
 We do not know: for human nature is
 As deep as bottomless perdition, and
 440 It acts defiant of a rule or law.

FOURTH SECTION.

- As he concluded his soliloquy
 He heard the sound of voices. Starting to
 His feet he sought escape. Too late: the wall
 Was high and difficult to climb, and as
 445 It was a corner of the garden, all
 Escape was gone. He turned to see who was
 Approaching, and the sight that met his gaze
 Completely paralyzed his nerves, and stopped
 The beating of his heart. Among the trees
 450 He saw a couple, arm in arm, appear. A cry

Escaped the tortured wretch, as he beheld
The objects of his fright, with horror keen.

“Oh phantoms from the realm of night! do I
Sēē resurrected corpses come to mock
455 My agony. Where shall I hide from them?
Behind this screen of flowers. Here they come!”

Retreat had scarce been covered when the forms
Of Catherine and Bertrand entered, sat
Upon the bench, with arms entwined about
460 Each other. Bertrand was the first to speak.

“You must be tired, my love; although our walk
Was not extended; still, you have not yet
Recovered from the shock that you received.”

The silvery voice replied, “Tis so, my lord—
465 My Bertrand, I should say. I have enjoyed
Our ramble very much, and earned a rest
By honest exercise.” Then noticing
That Bertrand’s face was grave, she archly said,

“What makes you sober, dear; does conscience
prick?
470 “Oh no,” replied the heir, “but burdened with
A thought about yourself.”

“Indeed!” returned
The voluntary exile with a smile,
“Am I such consequence?”

“Assuredly
You are,” protested he with evidence.
475 “Now Catherine, the opportunity
Affords a time to ask a question which
“I have not put to you as yet.”

“Proceed,”
The lady said with charming calmness, “I
Am ready to be catechised.”

“Why did
480 Yōu leave your home,” said he, observing her,
“Without at least becoming cognizant
Of my appearance, virtues, vices, and
My personage in general?”

“Because,”
She slowly answered him, “I would not see
485 You till the day of marriage.”

“True,” concurred
The heir, “and is that all there was? Oh do

Not fear to tell me: do proceed; " for she
 Had hesitated. Let us guess the thoughts
 That occupied her mind the little space
 490 Of time that Bertrand spoke, and waited for
 Reply — a moment at the most.

The man
 That sat beside her, whom she loved with all
 Her heart in spite of courtship's brevity;
 Whom she believed was honest, virtuous
 495 And temperate; in her eyes a paragon
 Of moral excellence — this was the man
 Who had been charged with horrifying sins,
 And vices fit to paralyze the tongue
 That uttered them. Had he been vilified?
 500 This noble specimen of man, whose fair
 Complexion, honey breath and healthy eye
 Proclaimed the accusation to be false.

With fire proceeding from her eyes she said,
 " I will explain — for I believe he lied! "
 505 The vehemence of this remark was such
 As made the heir exclaim in much surprise,
 " Who lied? "

The man that I will tell you of,"
 Replied the girl, now thoroughly aroused,
 While Bertrand wondered why the bushes shook
 510 So strangely; for the wretch was overcome
 With fright, and could not keep himself within
 Control, and trembled violently, which made
 The flower bushes rustle nervously.

" Before my father told me of his plan,
 515 Matured, decided,—did you ever know
 A monk by name of Charles, that lived within
 The monastery near your residence? "

" Why not? " replied Lörd Bértränd, startled at
 The change of subject suddenly.

" Then think again,"
 520 Commanded Catherine.

" But I am sure,"
 Insisted Bertrand in surprise.

" Then who
 Was your confessor? " asked the maid, with stern
 Demeanor.

" Father Jean," responded he.

“ And did you never have confession from
A friar of the monastery? ”

“ No,”

The wondering youth replied, with anxious look.

“ Then listen to my story. At the hour
Of sundown Father Augustine would come
To hear confession. But one night there came
530 In place a Father Charles. He brought excuse
From Father Augustine, and told me then
That I would shortly have to marry one
Whose life was vicious, and whose habits bad.
He said that when at Anjou he received
535 Confession at the Monastery from
Lörd Bértrand ” —

“ Pretty lie! ” the youth broke in,
With anger in his voice, “ I never said
Confession at the Monastery, nor
As much as heard of any Father Charles.”

540 But Catherine resumed her narrative.
“ He told me Bertrand would confess his sins
With mocking reverence, which turned to laugh
As soon as he was through. He begged and plead
To save the youth, but all in vain: he seemed
545 Resolved to slaughter soul and body by
His sins.”

“ The conscience of the Devil would
Revolt at such depravity! ” Lord Bertrand said
Between his teeth. “ I wonder what it is
That makes the bushes yonder shake? ”

“ The wind! ”

550 Retorted Catherine, who, nettled by
The interruption, sharply spoke, and thus
Resumed: “ He then enumerated all
His sins in such a horrifying stream,
That naturally I vowed I never would
555 Become the wife of such a man. He urged
Me to rebel, by many words, by hints,
By aggravating questions, numerous
Ideas, and statements of significance —
Which I accepted from the man. I asked
560 His reason and authority for so
Disclosing secrets of confessional;
But he replied he wished to save me from

The dreadful fate of being fettered to
 A man, whose sins appalled the light of day ;
 565 And asked if his solicitude did not
 His action vindicate."

" All this he said,"
 Lord Bertrand asked with stifled voice.

To which
 His Catherine replied :
 " And many things
 Of moment I forget."

The heir could not
 570 Restrain his anger longer, and he burst
 In furious denunciations, thus :
 " The author of such villainy must have
 A conscience seared communing with a fiend."
 Then rose, and drew his sword.

" Where can the knave
 575 Be found? " he cried, with fierce expression in
 His voice, upon his countenance, and in
 His eye ; " Ye ' ministers of vengeance,' bring
 The wicked wretch to me, and let me sheathe
 My rapier in his carrion heart until
 580 It blushes maiden red. I'll run him through,
 Present his carcass to the vultures for
 A putrid festival! where is the man? "

The guilty soul behind the shaky screen
 Was overcome. Remorse had weakened him,
 585 And fright had crushed his spirit. All his strength
 Was spent, and when the frenzied youth proclaimed
 His fearful threats he clung with all his might
 To screen and bush for his support. It strained,
 It weakened, toppled, fell. The crash alarmed
 590 The two, who now confronted Arnaud. Then
 The heir sprang back, and Catherine arose,
 With grave demeanor, stately majesty.
 With keen denunciatory finger, at
 Their foe she pointed, and with solemn voice
 595 Declared, to Bertrand's great surprise,

" Behold
 The author of our miseries."

His head
 Was low, his arms were powerless,
 His face was white. He trembled violently

As Bertrand, drawing nearer, thus exclaimed :
 " The mystery is solved: the tide recedes,
 600 Reveals the shoal that nearly wrecked our souls.
 You! Arnaud! yes, 't was you; the friar, the ghost.
 And you deceived her ladyship, and with
 Your falsehoods so provoked, that she alone
 Departed from her father's house, and in
 605 Despair essayed to take her life. 'T was you
 Who haunted me, and when I leaped the cliff
 Exulted with revengeful shout. Why man
 Tis heinous: you must have a monitor
 Of hell within your diabolical
 610 Extent. Perchance you think I did wrong:
 My business was to swell the fortunes of
 My father; therefore it was proper that
 I thoroughly convince him of your sly
 Deceitful nature. I was right: but did
 615 Not rate you evil as you are. Your acts
 Have proved how accurate my scales have been
 In which I weighed your character. I did
 Not heed your threat: when you had gone 't was
 lost,
 Nor recollected till the present day.
 620 Suspicion of you as the ghost did not
 Occur to me before or since I threw
 Myself into the river."

This surprised
 His Catherine, who was not yet aware
 Of such a fact occurring.

" Criminal wretch!
 625 Where were you educated for such sin?
 In Hades College, under tutorship
 Of Satan? Shocking wickedness as yours
 Proclaims instruction from malignant fiends."

Then turning to his lady-love he said,
 630 " My lady will withdraw, and leave us for
 A little while to argue on the point."

The mighty nature of the girl gave way.
 " Oh do not fight a duel love; you will
 Be killed! your words have much significance."

635 " I simply wish to argue on the point,"
 Replied her lover tenderly.

" But you

Infer the raiper point," the girl declared,
In tears.

"Withdraw," he half commanded her,
"Do not detain us now."

With blinded eyes
640 She ran to gather comfort from Madame.

FIFTH SECTION.

Contemporaneous with the scenes above
Recorded is the simple banquet of
The ducal party, in the dining room
Of our familiar inn. The peers return,
645 And in the sitting room they seat themselves.
Then Normandy this observation makes:

"Madame deserves a compliment for this
Impromptu lunch. T'was excellent indeed."

"In which opinion I agree," concurred
650 The Duke of Anjou, and the Duchess joined—
"My nature craves variety, and this
Plain wholesome fare is quite a pleasant change."
The Duke of Normandy and Treasurer,
Sebastian, held a conference aside,
655 The sentiment of which induced a frown.
The Duke exclaimed —

"Your grace has really been
Too kind: I had anticipated that
This trifling act of courtesy would be
From me: for at this simple parting meal
660 I hoped to be the host."

"Your grace forgets,"
Responded Anjou, with a quiet smile,
"That on my territory you are guest.
It is my duty thus to entertain."

"You do have rules indeed," said Normandy,
665 "But pardon me, your grace, do you observe
Such obligations always, for I ask
To learn, but not to be inquisitive?"

"I always do, your grace," replied the Duke
Of Anjou smilingly, and Normandy
670 Affirmed with zeal,

"Such virtue doth deserve
A recompense; tis rare indeed."

- The host
- Rejoined, with grave reflection in his voice,
 "An act of duty needs no recompense,
 Except the consciousness that noble deeds
 675 Impart: for if we seek reward for acts
 Of duty, then the elevating thought
 Of duty fades, to be succeeded by
 A greed of gain."
- "Receive," said Normandy,
 "My thanks for this instruction. I regret
 680 That we must part." Then rising he resumed:
 The sun has warned me to pursue my way."
 "A movement I exceedingly regret,"
 Exclaimed the Duchess, rising to her feet.
 They all had risen, and the Duke advanced
 685 To bid his guest adieu; when suddenly
 The garden door was open burst, and there
 Stood Catherine, half blinded by her tears,
 And choked with sobs. Despairingly she screamed,
 "Madame, what shall I do; he will be killed!"
 690 "My Catherine!" exclaimed her father as
 He sprang to clasp her in paternal arms.
 "My father!" she replied, and would have
 thrown
 Herself within his warm embrace, but she
 Remembered what a tragedy was then
 695 Enacted in the garden.
- "Wait! tis not
 The time for us to greet when Anjou's son
 Is fighting duels to vindicate our wrongs."
 "My son!" the father cried.
 "Oh where?" his wife
 Inquired, in tone of deep anxiety.
 700 The mighty maiden was herself again.
 Her hand had waved her father back, and now
 Was raised to beckon on the company.
 "Come! I will lead the way," she cried, and
 through
 The open door the eager people rushed.
 705 But we had best precede them, and behold
 The progress of the fray. Impatiently
 Lord Bértrand challenges his enemy.
 "Make haste, designing villain, and prepare

To die."

- 710 " Unhappy taunt ; it stirred the fiend
To action in the man, and mocked his woe.
His spirit had relented, and he felt
Repentance sweling in his breast. But now
The appetite returned ; the hunger for
Revenge obtained the mastery. His eye
715 Could not restrain the fierce malignant gleam.
He straightened up, unsheathed his wicked blade,
And cried,

- " Insulting mocker, you will test
The virtue of my skill before I do!
You think because my spirit is consumed
720 By fierce remorse that I will cringe before
Your naked sword ; you think because my heart
Is torn by savage passions courage has
Deserted me. My nerves respond unto
The call of will although my soul is wrecked.
725 It matters not if I am right or wrong,
I must defend myself, or die a slave."

- To this the heir refused response, but fixed
His eyes upon his deadly foe, and threw
Himself with vigor in the strife. Their swords
730 Were crossed in mortal combat, gleamed as when
The lightning, zigzag, rips the atmosphere.
The fierce engagement raged with awful vim,
But Bertrand was the stronger, and the skill
Of Arnaud was of no effect to meet
735 The onset of the youth. The ring of steel
Was all that broke the silence of the scene.
Then Bertrand beat his adversary down,
And gave the fatal thrust. His enemy
Was doomed. A stifled cry of agony
740 Was all that marked the consequence, and as
He sank the people rushed upon the scene.

" What, Arnaud ! " Anjou, thunderstruck, ex-
claimed.

The fast expiring man upraised himself,
And murmured,

- " Yes, about to meet his God.
745 Oh I had felt the chilling touch of death,
Ere this damp, freezing blast had palsied me ;
But never had its awful gloom oppressed

My soul as it this moment does."

Then to

750 His executioner he said, "I filled
A vial of poison for your death; it broke,
And seared my flesh."

His eye was glazing fast,
His face was white as fleece, and on his brow
The dews of dark eternal night were laid.
The Lady Catherine was overcome,
755 And Bertrand led her to the rustic bench.
A painful silence followed — all was still.
The dying man then raised his eyes to those
Of Bertrand — spoke in sad, prophetic tones:

760 "The poignard of revenge first tickles, then
It stabs: beware, beware!"

Then Bertrand spoke,

"Our miseries are ended, yours begin."

A spasm of despair convulsed the face
Of him who was so soon to meet his doom.
The head sank lower and lower, till Arnaud lay
765 A rigid corpse upon the senseless earth.

MISCELLANEOUS

POEMS.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

SABBATH MUSIC.

1. It was Sabbath in the city.
It was Sabbath on the street,
And a balm of restful ointment
Had been poured on tired feet;
For the wheel had ceased its rumbling,
And the whistle held its breath,
While the rest of weary thousands
Left the street as still as death.
2. Hark! the sabbath bells were pealing
Forth their invitations sweet,
As I paused before the entrance
Of a sanctified retreat;
Left the silent, sleeping pavements,
Stood within the thronging aisle,
And adored the God of Heaven,
Kneeling in the sacred pile.
3. Then the solemn stillness vanished,
As the organ thundered forth,
All its majesty of volume,
As the storms from out the North:
I could feel the deep-toned thunder,
Sweeping through my conscious blood,
I could feel the muse's passion
Undulating as a flood,

4. Now arose the sweet soprano
In its silvery refrain,
From a soul of deep emotion
Flowed the captivating strain:
Ringing out a wealth of music,
Thrilling to the secret soul,
Up it rose, until exalted
To the ear of God its goal.
5. As sky-lark that is mourning
The companion of its choice
By a sweet and plaintive wailing,
Blended in the alto's voice:
In a swelling tide of music
Rose the accents soft and clear,
As the ring of precious metal—
Faultless to the tuneful ear.
6. Like a bird of song in Eden,
Answering in raptured voice
To the notes of some sweet songster
Through a vale of paradise,
Rose the two seraphic voices,
Caroling their melody,
In that sweet inspiring anthem,
— “My faith looks up to thee.”
7. One could eas'ly dream of Heaven,
Of the bliss beyond the sky,
Of the chanting of the seraphs
To the majesty on high:
As the anthem rose to Heaven,
Flowing from the spring of song,
Through the agitated chambers
Of my soul it echoed long.
8. I could hear the rush of angels,
Halting in their mute surprise,
Sent to bear the precious anthem
To the throne above the skies:

- I could almost see the father
Starting from his seat in bliss,
Lest a single chord of music
In that anthem they should miss.
9. As the thunder on the mountains
Echoes back from peak to prong,
Joined the organ and the chorus
In a tidal wave of song ;
As a flash of precious jewels
From a regal diadem,
Burst the brilliant strains of music
From the mortal cherubim:
10. Mighty as the roar of breakers
Lifting high their peaks of foam,
Echoed through the gothic arches,
Thundered to the gilded dome ;
Lost among the hollow murmurs
As the breath on frosty air,
Till the sunlight glowed with music,
And the mind was filled with prayer.
11. For it seemed the very rendering,
Unto these incarnate ears,
Of the lyrics of the angels,
That was moving me to tears ;
And it pierced into my spirit,
Fluttered through my trembling nerves,
Till my soul burst forth in music,
Rendered to the God it serves.
12. Thus the sweet enchanting music
Ravished my immortal soul,
And prepared it for the sermon
When the bell had ceased to toll ;
Words of love and thoughts of Heaven
Soothed the spirit, calmed the breast,
And the chords of lovely anthems
Touched the weary soul with rest.

THE DESCENT OF JEHOVAH.

A NARRATIVE OF THE RESOLVE AND
DESCENT OF THE DEITY TO
DELUGE THE EARTH.

1. Jehovah from his lofty throne
Beholds the sins of man,
And fiercer has his fury grown,
And terrible the ban:
He plans destruction of the race,
He contemplates a flood,
To deluge Earth from pole to girth,
But save the just and good.
2. The anger of the King of Bliss
Is awful to behold,
He starts in righteous fury from
His stately throne of gold:
With scepter of almighty sway
He smites the crystal path,
As Heaven rocks the Lord unlocks
His thunderbolts of wrath.
3. The Deity proclaims his will —
By seraphim it flies —
And from the region of the winds
The coursers of the skies
In all their dignity and strength
Parade before the throne;
As Heaven bends the Lord ascends
To make his anger known.
4. The steeds are sable thunder-clouds
Whose hoofs the Heavens jar;
Their shoulders black as midnight's pall —
A hurricane his car;

Each chariot-wheel a whirlwind fierce,
Revolving dark and swift :
The shaft a beam of solar gleam
That penetrates a rift.

5. Upon the tempest's darkened brow
A stalwart angel stands,
As charioteer he proudly waves
The ensign, and commands :
Around the car the thunderbolts
Arouse the fear of men,
While meteors flame Jehovah's name —
That scorns the tongue or pen.
6. Upon His brow the rainbow dwells,
Within his grasp the storm,
Before his face the lightnings flee,
His frown the tempests form :
A veil of mist conceals his face
From mortal eyes below,
His arm displayed their doom essayed,
With horror, death and woe.
7. Along the pathless skies he sweeps,
With terror to impart,
To man he reigns invisible
Within the cyclone's heart ;
And as the gallant prow of some
Redoubted ship of war
The water parts, so forward darts
The Great Eternal's car.
8. The planets witness his approach,
And in their journey's pause,
To pay their homage to their lord,
And recognize his laws.
Upon elliptics vast and smooth
They move in solemn course,
Majestic, grand, his mighty hand
Provides the motive force.

9. Across the brilliant firmament
The blazing comet flies,
Magnificent in luster clothed
It lights the midnight skies.
Upon unmeasured orbit swift
It scales the height of space,
Or plunges deep, where planets creep
With calm resistless pace.
10. He steps upon a mountain brow,
He scans the frightened plain,
His nostrils breathe the doom of man,
And aggravate his pain :
The breast of Nature heaves in fear
As rocks are split in twain,
And earthquake's jar spreads near and far
Along the stricken main.
11. It stirs a lusty tidal-wave
To rouse from torpid sleep,
That sweeps and storms with careless strength
Upon the restless deep :
The black convulsion heaves and throbs
Across its timid face ;
While flees the dawn it thunders on
With fierce impetuous pace.
12. Upon the doomed and shuddering earth
In majesty God treads,
The visage of the waters deep
His perturbation dreads :
Upon the pinions of the wind
Omnipotent he soars,
And dark his lips with black eclipse,
When baleful tempest roars.

RECREATION.

1. Are you weary, child of trouble,
Do the paths of life offend,
Is thy soul at conflict in thee
With the ills that never mend?
Does thy daily toil oppress thee
By its fever and its weight?
Does the tide of life beset thee,
Toiling early, toiling late.
2. If the world seems harsh, unfeeling,
In its strife for gain and gold,
If the sun that shines upon thee
Seemeth not the sun of old,
If the noise and smoke of city
Dulls the senses, clogs the brain,
Cast aside the load of trouble —
Wander forth through pike and lane.
3. Leave the heat and smoke of business,
Leave the office and the street,
Leave the din and roar and clatter,
And the ceaseless tread of feet;
Drop the cares of life a season,
Though contracted it may be:
Flee to mountain, flee to river,
Or the margin of the sea.
4. Leave behind the fret and worry
For a brief and pleasant term,
Push for scenes of health and beauty —
Grasp the hand of Nature firm:
Read her name on every flower,
Hear her song in every stream,
See her smile in every meadow,
View her beauty as a dream.

5. Gaze upon her fairy motions
As she moves upon the spray ;
See her dance upon the sunbeams
With the joyous and the gay ;
Hear her sob among the tree-tops
With the friendless and folorn ;
Hear her moan upon the billows
With the poor and wretched born.
6. As you pass some pretty lakelet
In its tide thy face incline !
As you pass some forest monarch
Underneath his boughs recline ;
As you pass within a valley
Feel its stillness in thy soul !
As you glide along a river
Feel its calm, majestic roll.
7. When the moon in varied phases
Rises from the hillock's shade,
And the owlet's dismal hooting
Issues from the distant glade,
While the thicket's sable darkness
Glitters with the firefly —
To the chorus of the insects
Echo merrily, " Good-bye."

TIME.

Of Time I sing, to Time address my song,
To chant the story of its acts, describe
Its power, unveil its majesty. Of all
The gifts to men most valuable: the boon
6 Of industry; but to the indolent
A burden — yet the seed that all must sow,
And only reap the fruits — for reap they must,
It matters not if yielding fair or foul.

Its flight began amid convulsive throes
10 Of pregnant life, when Chaos, fierce and wild,
His dark dominion ruled; when suns were not,
And planets roamed unchecked and aimless on
The gloomy heath. Then were those mighty twins,
Whose names are Life and Time, at one profound,
15 Momentous birth produced: — the one creates,
The other seeks to ruin and destroy.

Its lordly chariot stands — prepared to sweep
The universe, and mar the works of life.
It mounts the lofty perch, and sharply goads
20 Its coursers on: in all its terror, down
The centuries its flight maintains — no force
Can hinder, and no force can haste. Through space,
Through Heaven, through Hell it moves — no obstacle
Its path obstructs, no challenger defies.

25 Its heart is young; though countless ages pile
Their burdens up, its shoulders scorn the load;
And though millenniums have passed by scores,
By hundreds, since its advent on the road
Of vast creation, yet its gait remains
30 The same unfaltering march, that undermines
The universal system of the stars.

Its heart is young; as fresh and young as when
In giant infancy it grasped its power —
A date unregistered, to sway until
35 Its day of death — a doom unfixed. It moves
In solemn grandeur on: though moons should waste,

And stars should hide their heads in death, it heeds
Them not. As silent as the birth of thought,
In hushed and breathless majesty it glides.

- 40 Its countenance is dull, a stony waste,
Unfeeling desolate, and void. Its eyes
Are rolled away beneath their canopies,
And in those chambers spectacles behold
Denied to men. The marble orbs, that set
45 Their pitless stare upon the path that lies
Before, are obdurate and cruel; nor turn
Their stony gaze to view its dreary wake,
Where all is desolation and despair,
But fixed upon the plain of space, they scan
50 The universe, and pierce eternity.

- The face of Nature shrinks to thus confront
Its doom: the flowers decay, the floods and tides
Retreat, the meadows turn to stony wastes—
The mighty oak that mocks the hurricane
55 Succumbs before the rolling majesty
Of Time. The great and small alike become
Its prey; to feed its hunger atom and
Colossal gorge its lawless appetite.

- It rolls upon the blooming face of youth,
60 And furrows deep the lovely countenance
With heartless fury; scathes the vigorous form,
Till bent and shrunken by the blast of age,
It trembles, shrinks, and dies; but Time observes
It not:— it passes on, nor can retract:
65 But forward move the ratchet-wheels of Time,
And on its path it never can retreat.
The Past, the withered Past, its warning cries,
But Future scorns attention. Mortals build
A temple to their vanity; but Time
70 With fierce, resistless sweep advances, smites
The temple, smites the deep foundations, yea,
The rock on which the deep foundations rest.

- Its coursers tramp with hoofs of adamant
Upon the battlements of feudal pride,
75 And fortresses, impregnable by men,
Submit before the silent siege of Time.
The palaces of regal pomp decay

- Before its all-consuming breath, and works
Of ages, monuments, and monoliths,
80 The sepulchers of dynasties, decline
Their heads to mingle with the dust. The crests
Of hills, the stately mountain peaks, that heave
Their massive grandeur to the skies,— must pass
85 Away —dissolve before its energy.

- It marches ruthlessly upon the page
Of history, and it soars serenely far
Above the wrecks of empires and of states.
The crash of worlds ari-es from its path,
90 As suns and planets crumble into dust
Beneath its awful tread. Until the blast
Of doom its course it will pursue, nor will
It halt its fierce momentum till it smites
Against the portals of eternity.

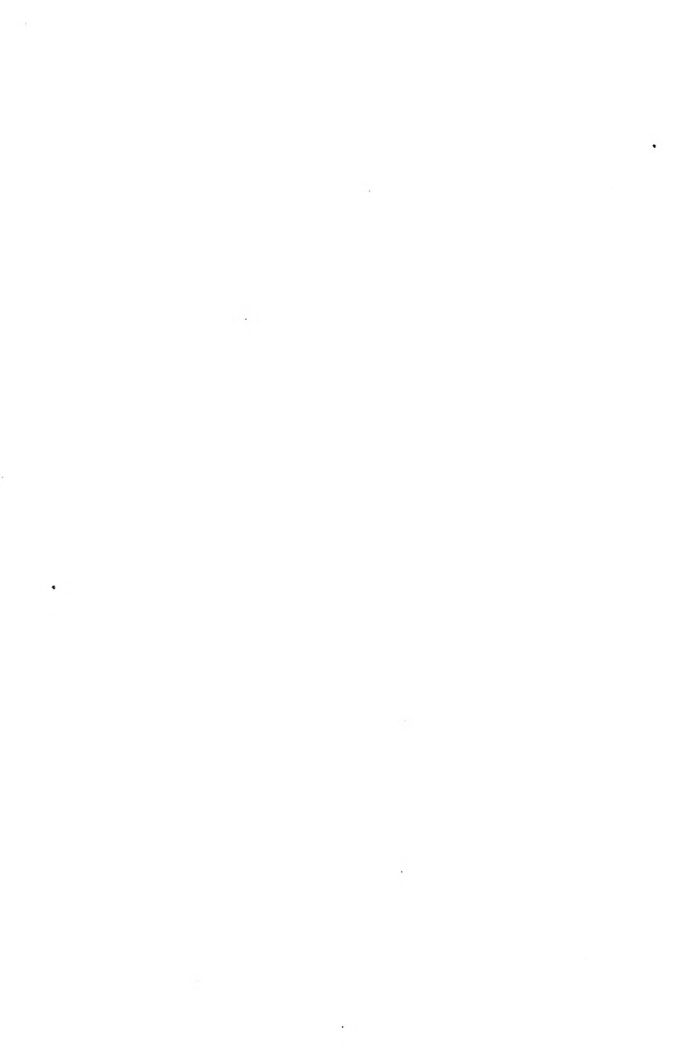
FLOWERS.

1. Are you fond of flowers, reader?
Have you felt the joy that greets
All the senses with a quiver
When you smell the balmy sweets?
Have you felt the solace springing
From their sympathy and love,
And imagined oft that flowers
Represent the bliss above?
2. Hew I love the yellow crocus,
How I love the daisies, shy!
Surely none can love the flowers
Half as ardently as I;
For the tender little dew-drop,
And the violet in May,
Have a place in my affections,
That will last till I am gray.
3. To my cheek I press the cowslip,
And the fragrant jessamine,
To my lips I press the pansy,
And the tinted columbine:
From the white and dreaming lily
Springs a cooling air of peace,
That subdues the heated passions,
And from anger grants release.
4. None are poor, or lack importance,
In my nature-loving eyes,
All have share of my affections,
And are bound to me with ties
That a life of woes can never
Break the golden links of love,
Nor the blade of sorrow sever
Cords that sympathy has wove.

5. At the moment of misfortune,
When we test our truest friends,
Is the time when flowers comfort,
Is the time the tulip lends
Of its beauty and its fragrance
To the weary, aching heart—
Quickly knits the friendship closer
By the sweetness of its art.
6. When my heart is filled with sorrow;
When my soul is sick of sin,
And a melancholy sadness
Has pervaded all within,
To the flowers I am driven
In the time of silent grief,
And confess the weary burden,
And receive the glad relief.
7. There are secrets that are hidden
From the nearest, dearest friends,
But the roses know my secrets,
And the mignonet extends
From its heart a sympathetic
Bond of simple, soothing cheer:—
Can you wonder that I cherish
Nature's buds so fresh and dear?
8. When the flow of life is smoothest,
And the heart is blithe and gay,
Then the lily, cold and stately,
Is the flower of the day;
But if bitter trials vex me,
Then I turn to humble sweets,
For they harmonize in pity
With a heart that lowly beats.
9. Who could live without the flowers?
Who could bear existence long
If the sweets that droop and wither
In the winter, bleak and strong,

Should be dead at spring's re-opening—
Should be dead when Summer flees—
Should be dead when Autumn paints
The crimson flush upon the trees:

10. Would it not be heartless, think you,
Would it not be cold indeed,
For a soul to be indifferent
In the universal need?
Such a one is fit to consort
With the miser in his den,
And the world abjure his presence
As an enemy of men,





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